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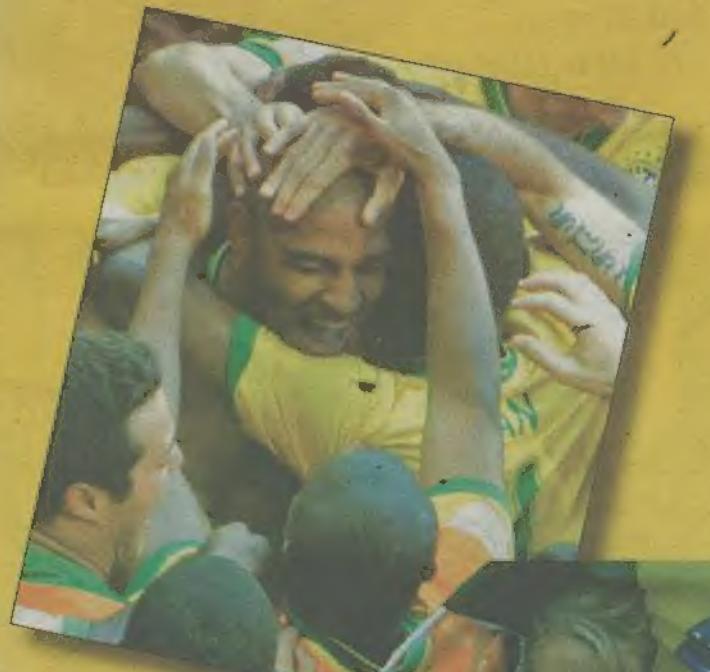
## DOWN BUT NOT OUT!



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2



LATEST WORLD  
CUP ACTION  
Page 12-18



VODAFONE CUP-  
MID-SEASON  
REVIEWS  
Page 4-7

SOUVENIR  
FANS  
POSTER  
INSIDE  
Page 12



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# VODAFONE CUP

*Review*



## RICHMOND EAGLES FC



After a promising opening round win against Essendon Royals, newly promoted Richmond soon found that life in the Vodafone Cup was going to be a struggle, not winning for another eleven games. Losing two games against Frankston Pines and Melbourne Knights in which numerous scoring opportunities were created, Richmond then displayed a frustrating knack for being unable to hold on to a lead, conceding late goals against Green Gully and Sunshine Georgies.

Able to host a home game for the first time in Round Six against Heidelberg United, disaster struck when after a solid opening, two sloppy goals were conceded before a dramatic floodlight failure following a power surge in the area. With the game resuming at 0-2 two weeks later, Richmond again took the game to Heidelberg early before the Bergers took charge and added a third goal to the final scoreline.

James Robinson was signed from English side Altrincham, and scored on debut to earn a 1-1 draw with then league leaders Altona Magic. He scored twice in the next game, a 2-3 loss to Fawkner-Whittlesea in which the Eagles missed a penalty, fought back from 0-2 down to equalise and then conceded a late goal on a counter-attack when pushing for a winner themselves.

After a stunning goal from Veton Korcarevski, the Eagles failed to capitalise on South Melbourne being reduced to ten men following an all-in brawl and put in their worst performance of the season in losing 2-1 at Bob Jane Stadium. The following week saw Robinson score again in a 1-1 draw at home to Kingston City in which the Eagles deserved more for their efforts.

A poor second half capitulation against top of the table Oakleigh Cannons saw a heavy 2-5 defeat. Robinson had scored the equaliser early on before Daniel Visevic gave the Eagles a lead, which they were unable to take into the break after conceding a late first half goal.

A goal from Visevic brought about the second win of the season, an entertaining affair against Preston Lions. The win was tarnished with the loss of Josip Rajher to a season-ending knee injury after only five minutes. Wasted opportunities saw Richmond fail to get full points after a first-half Robinson goal in a 1-1 draw at Bulleen Zebras.

Showing worrying inconsistency, Richmond then lost 1-2 at home to Essendon Royals. A second half goal from James Baskerville was all Richmond could find after giving away to great a lead in the first period. By the end of the weekend Dean Hennessey had been dismissed as coach with Phil Stubbins brought in to try and steer the side off the bottom of the table.

After conceding another early goal, Robinson struck his seventh of the season to

## VODAFONE CUP TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Oakleigh Cannons	15	10	3	2	31	16	33
South Melbourne	16	9	2	5	32	18	29
Kingston City	16	8	4	4	26	18	28
Altona Magic	16	7	7	2	21	13	28
Heidelberg Utd	16	6	5	5	23	22	21
Bulleen Zebras	16	6	5	5	17	19	23
Melbourne Knights	16	5	6	5	21	25	21
Sunshine Georgies	16	5	4	7	20	22	19
Fawkner Blues	16	6	1	9	28	31	19
Preston Lions	16	4	6	6	26	31	18
Essendon Royals	16	4	5	7	16	21	17
Green Gully	15	3	6	6	18	22	15
Frankston Pines	16	4	3	9	15	26	15
Richmond Eagles	16	2	7	7	18	28	13

force a 1-1 draw at Frankston Pines. Apart from missing numerous chances to win the game, the day ended badly for Richmond with Graham Hockless sustaining a knee injury that will still keep him out for another three weeks. The Eagles remained unbeaten under Stubbins when fighting back to earn a 1-1 draw with the Melbourne Knights through a very early second half goal from Korcarevski.

With ten games remaining and two points adrift at the foot of the ladder, time is running out for the Bartlett Reserve outfit to escape the drop. The nature of the Vodafone Cup in 2006 means that this is by no means impossible, the even state of the competition making successive wins allow to teams to climb two or three places at a time. The upcoming games at home against Green Gully and Sunshine Geor-

gies will remain vital to Richmond's hopes of staying up.

Robinson, Korcarevski and Visevic should continue to create scoring chances, converting them will be critical. They could soon be joined by Xhezair Sulemani when he regains fitness. Rajher has been the biggest loss in the middle of the park, but apart from him and Hockless all other midfielders and defenders are available. With recent acquisition Stuart McCluskey, Richmond is more solid at the back than the first time around in the season.

By Mark Boric

## LEADING GOAL SCORERS

- James Robinson 7
- Daniel Visevic 4
- Veton Korcarevski 3

## ALTONA MAGIC FC



Action between Preston Lions and Altona Magic.  
fensive side.  
"We highlighted that about last season, that our defensive game let us down," he said.  
"We've worked extremely hard and put a lot of focus on it this year, and to have the best defensive record so far is very satisfying.  
"They are keeping their shape very well and it's very rare that we expose our 'keeper one on one."  
Another reason for the successful beginning to the season has been the closeness of the playing group and their willingness to go the extra yard their team-mates.  
"We seem to have a squad of players that seem to get along with each other quite well, and the camaraderie is quite good," Murphy said.  
"Every one of them is putting a big effort in, and the important thing is that we just keep going.  
"They seem to be enjoying it, which is a good thing."

With 10 weeks left until the finals Altona has not quite locked in a top six spot, but a steady performance in the run home should see it involved in the September action.

The players enjoyed a light week on the training track last week, getting together instead for a brainstorming session to work on ways in which they can improve in the final third of the campaign.

Murphy identified the need to turn potential drawn games - of which they have accumulated an equal league-high seven so far - into three-point victories.

Also on the to do list is to find more goals from midfield to assist club leading goalscorer Sash Becvinovski, who also leads the Vodafone Cup with 11 goals.

The next best for the Magic is Igor Arsovski with four, as Koce Delev, Igor Kolevski and Tomi Razov look to hit their straps in the coming weeks. Altona returns to the pitch with a dangerous away trip to Essendon Royals on Sunday 26 June.

By James Taylor

## LEADING GOAL SCORERS

- Sash Becvinovski 11
- Igor Arsovski 4
- Tomi Razov 2

FANS of Altona Magic's Vodafone Cup team have been blessed with success in the last few years. A perennial finalist, the Magic is again on target to play in the last few weeks of the season after a stellar opening 16 rounds.

Understandably, coach Ken Murphy could not be happier with the situation as his players take a well-earned two-week break.

"If you told me at the start of the season that we'd be sitting third at this stage I would have been happy," he said.

"I think every game we've played we've done well enough to beat the opposition team, so we're sitting in a reasonably comfortable position."

Altona was the most impressive team in the first eight rounds, a period which it did not drop a single point. Its only losses so far came against ladder leader Oakleigh in round nine (2-1) and in round 14 against Fawkner/Whittlesea (1-0).

It bounced back from the unexpected loss against the Blues a week later, posting one of the biggest results of the year to become the only side to defeat second-placed Kingston at home.

While scoring goals has not been a problem so far for the Magic, it has been the defensive end which has been the most impressive.

After 16 rounds the boys from Paisley Park have conceded just 12 goals - the only team averaging less than one goal against per match.

After conceding three goals to South Melbourne in Altona's finals loss last year, Murphy has set about moulding his unit into a successfully unforgiving de-



With sixteen pulsating rounds of the 2006 Vodafone Cup completed, many pundits' championship favourites the Oakleigh Cannons, are sitting four points clear of their nearest rivals South Melbourne and hold a game in hand.

The season started with so much promise whereby Stuart Munro sought to bolster a squad that was already brimming with stars. The board underlined their ambitions and granted Munro's wishes by signing several household names boasting international experience, including Esala Masi, Bill Damianos Steve Lawrie and the nomadic veteran Con Boutsianis. Stuart Munro and his men fully deserve their first place position as they have wooed crowds across Victoria with their exciting brand of football bringing them 31 goals and conceding only 16 goals, ranking them second in both areas. In addition to their impressive goal difference record is a new found resilience that has not been seen before from the Cannons.

In previous seasons the teams' poor discipline, internal disharmony, management instability and inability to play when the chips are down proved to be their undoing. To the Cannons credit, they have displayed all the hallmarks of a championship side as they have come from behind on several occasions to grind out results. This was evident, when former Fijian international Esala Masi, scored an injury time screamer in front of a packed Jack Edwards Reserve in February. This

strike not only earned the Cannons a valuable point against fellow championship hopefuls Kingston City, but also a psychological advantage over their rivals.

To add to the Oakleigh Cannons remarkable season and togetherness never seen before, was the unfortunate passing away of one of their favourite sons, Peter Kakos which shocked and saddened an entire community. Kakos was a consummate professional who loved his football and proved pivotal to much of the success the Cannons have enjoyed this season.

He is being sorely missed by everyone who knew the striker and indeed the entire football community.

At the beginning of the season I predicted a top six finish for the Cannons and barring an injury crisis, Oakleigh's quality squad backed by their passionate supporters and a team spirit that is second to none, should see the Cannons finish in first position, giving them the best passage to advance through to the final.

CP's Prediction

Minor Premiers

"The Cannons depth, the quality possessed in all positions and strong resilience will see them as Minor Premiers"

By Chris Priftis



## LEADING GOAL SCORERS

- Sash Becvinovski 11
- Igor Arsovski 4
- Tomi Razov 2

## VODAFONE CUP ROUND 17

RICHMOND EAGLES v GREEN GULLY Friday 23rd June Kevin Bartlett Reserve, Richmond Mel: 59 A1 KO 8.30pm

KINGSTON CITY v OAKLEIGH CANNONS Friday 23rd June The Grange Reserve, Kingston Mel: 79 F8 KO 8:15pm

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS v SUNSHINE GEORGIES Sunday 24th June Knights Stadium, Sunshine Mel: 27 A6 KO 3pm

FAWKNER/WHITTLESEA v BULLEEN ZEBRAS Sunday 24th June Epping Stadium, Fawkner Mel: 17 J2 KO 6:00pm

PRESTON LIONS v SOUTH MELBOURNE Sunday 24th June BT Connor Reserve, Reservoir Mel: 18 B2 KO 3:00PM

HEIDELBERG UNITED v FRANKSTON PINES Sunday 24th June Olympic Village Heidelberg Mel: 19 D11 KO 6:00pm

ESSENDON ROYALS v ALTONA MAGIC Monday 25th June Veneto Social Club, Bulleen Mel: 32 D9 KO 8:15pm



# VODAFONE CUP

Review



## BULEEN ZEBRAS FC



Following an extremely disappointing 2005 season, where the then reigning premiers narrowly avoided relegation, the Zebras have bounced back this season in a manner which many football pundits would not have believed was possible.

With Michael Michalakopoulos at the helm, the Zebras have produced an efficient brand of football that may be deemed as frustrating, but ultimately produces the wanted and necessary result on most occasions. Although the side has been more than sound in defence, with the back four proving to be amongst the most miserly in the competition, Bulleen has struggled at the other end of the park with key signing Ricky Diaco netting solely two goals in his seven appearances for the club.

However, while the team's lack of a proven goalscorer may be deemed as a weakness, Bulleen has players capable of scoring goals all over the park, including surprise packet and relative unknown prior to this season, Hamlet Armenian.

While the 2004 premiers are accomplished at scrapping out results, a trait which will hold them in good stead come finals time, when the team has conceded more than one goal, the defence has been quite prone to leaking a few more.

This is evidenced by the fact the side has conceded four goals on three separate occasions so far this season. If Bulleen plans on emulating the feats of their team circa 2004, this is a tendency that the Michalakopoulos led side needs to eliminate immediately.

Bulleen's recent form has proved sketchy at best, with the side recording solely one win in the last four encounters. As the championship moves into its latter stages, the four time Vodafone Cup champions need to arrest this current trend in order to build some momentum and mount a late surge up the table.

One of only two teams to have conquered the high-flying Oakleigh Cannons, Bulleen has suffered from bouts of inconsistency at varying stages throughout the season thus far. A prime example was following their 4-1 trouncing at the hands of four-time national champions South Melbourne, the Zebras were able to scrap past the Cannons by the smallest of margins in Round 12.

Whether or not the side continues to possess this giant killing ability remains to be seen, however if the side can find a more regular avenue to goal, Bulleen may be the dark horse for the Vodafone Cup title.

By Simon Chiarelli

## LEADING GOAL SCORERS

- Hamlet Armenian 4**
- Ben Harbinson 4**
- Ricky Diaco 2**



## FAWKNER-WHITTLESEA BLUES FC

FAWKNER/WHITTLESEA'S season-long battle with a mounting injury list has almost been won as the club begins preparations for the run in to the Vodafone Cup finals.

The club will use the two-week break to nurse its players back to full health in a bid to put its preferred combination on the park - a luxury it has not enjoyed all season.

"The whole season has been a bit injury prone for a lot of players, from day one," Blues coach John Markovski said.

"We've got some time off so we can get a few more players on the park, and hopefully after the break I can have a full team to choose from."

For large chunks of the season the Blues have missed key playmakers Jurica Siljanovski, Sasa Ognenovski, Zoran Petrevski, John Angelovski and Mark Silic, exposing an inexperienced line-up for many of its matches.

Fawkner/Whittlesea began the season on the back foot with three consecutive losses as many of its stars looked on from the sidelines, but has slowly picked itself up as the weeks rolled on.

By round 11, the Blues were still in the bottom half with just three wins in the bank and a long list of injuries.

But a few wounded first team regulars have returned for the last couple of weeks, bringing stability, experience and most importantly, results.

The last five weeks have yielded three wins in a timely return to form, lifting the team to within striking distance of sixth place.

Now, like the same stage last year, the Blues are primed to make their run toward the finals as a number of its injured stars return to full fitness.

"We've been a little bit more consistent in the last three or four games," Markovski said.

"To beat Altona, who are a great side, and then to back up against South Melbourne the week after was a great result for the club and the boys.

"The boys have been a bit unlucky so far and hopefully we can turn it around in the second half of the season."

In a blow to the team's finals aspirations, Fawkner/Whittlesea's defensive general Ognenovski waved goodbye to his team-mates last week on his way to joining A-League outfit Queensland Roar.

Markovski admitted the loss of Ognenovski would leave a gap in his team's defence, but was never going to stand in the way of his chance to play in the country's highest standard competition.

"Sash is a quality player. He's done really well, and his opportunity has come to play in an higher league and I



wish him all the best," Markovski said.

"It gives an opportunity for a younger bloke to step up to senior level, and we've got plenty of younger players."

Fawkner/Whittlesea's immediate challenge after the two-week break will be an Italian derby against Bulleen on Sunday 25 June.

Beyond that, the team will continue on its quest to better last year's exit from the first week of the finals.

"Our intentions are to make the top six, the same as the start of the season," Markovski said.

"With the players we've got, we should be capable of making the top five or six."

## LEADING GOAL SCORERS

- Mark Tsiorlas 8**
- Carl Recchia 6**
- Sasa Ognenovski 4**



## GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS FC

said.

"I'd be very disappointed if we weren't playing attractive soccer, but we are."

The problem, as was feared at the beginning of the season, has been in the forward half.

Green Gully's failure to secure a noted striker in the pre-season left a huge burden on its talented midfield and young forwards, and the result has been a drought of goals.

Positively, midfield dynamo Brandon Vassallo has been pushed forward to good effect and youngster Matthew Sanders has proved he has a bright future in the green and white.

It was only last week that Gully moved out of the bottom two, courtesy of a desperate performance and 2-0 victory over Frankston.

"It was like a grand final scenario for us, and it will be the same when we play Richmond," Marth said.

The win was the first in eight matches for the Cavaliers and may be the turning point for the run home.

"First and foremost we want to make sure we're safe, but we want to push for the top six."



## LEADING GOAL SCORERS

- Brandon Vassallo 5**
- Matt Sanders 6**
- Zoran Markovski 2**



# VODAFONE CUP

Review



## SUNSHINE GEORGIES FC



**V A TEAM** used to the pressure of relegation battles is Sunshine Georgies, a team which has been in impressive form in the month prior to the two-week break. After staying in the top division last year, the Georgies have continued to improve in the first half of this season and look capable of sneaking into the top six.

After a slow start yielded just four points from a possible 18, Sunshine has steadily collected draw and wins as it moved ever closer to the top teams in the competition.

"We feel now that relegation is less of an issue than making the playoffs is," Sunshine football operations manager Benny Anastasiadis said.

"Many would have thought we'd be content to see off relegation, but we're looking far beyond that now."

New coach Joe Montemuro, who took over in round seven, has four wins, three draws and three losses to round 16, a solid result for a fresh face to Chaplin Reserve.

The Georgies experienced a lean spell from rounds eight to 11, but victories against Heidelberg, Fawkner/Whittesea and most recently Essendon in the last five weeks has breathed life into their finals aspirations. The inclusions of livewire Fidel Richards and consistent performer Mark Draycott have been crucial to Sunshine's chances this year, the pair contributing nine of the club's 20 goals.

"It took them about three weeks to settle in and get their match fitness up, but since they've started scoring goals they haven't stopped," Anastasiadis said. Sunshine is expecting to further strengthen the squad with the arrival of two players from Paraguay next week, and is ready for their attack on the second portion of the season.

### LEADING GOAL SCORERS

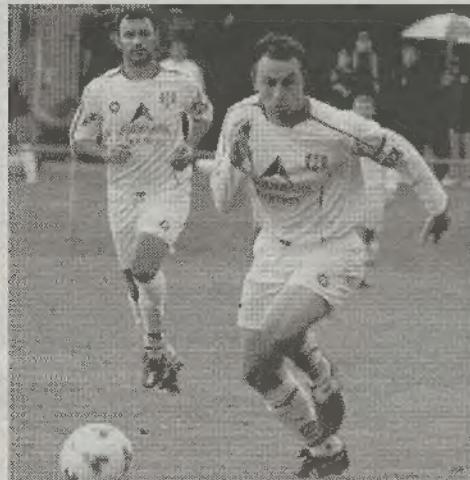
- Fidel Richards 5
- Mark Draycott 4
- Trent Waterson 2



## KINGSTON CITY FC

Will Kingston turn around a poor run of form and continue their push for top spot? Or will the rigors of a first Vodafone Cup season result in a battle to make the final six at all?

Of their eight wins at the mid season break, six have come at home for the Reds, Grange Reserve on a Friday night proving a happy hunting ground until only recently. The 1-0 home defeat to Altona in round 15 has contributed to a mini-slump, Kingston taking just one point from their three matches leading into the break. A break that couldn't have come at a better time for George Katsakis' men, given their next opponent Heidelberg had their back-to-back winning run halted by two weeks rest.



The highlight and lowlight of Kingston's season to date has come against the same side. In derby fixtures against South Melbourne, the Reds proved comprehensive winners at Grange Reserve, 3-0, but revenge was enacted by South, 4-1 at Bob Jane.

So to the remaining ten rounds of the season, and what Kingston must do to maintain their lofty league position. While the Reds will continue to field a potent attack, with the likes of Joe Spiteri, Michael Curcija and Joey Di Iorio to chose from in the final third, holding solid at the back will be tougher. Con Anthopoulos, Steve Iosifidis and Chris Konstans have all proven their merit at home, but 15 goals conceded in 9 away games poses questions. However the Reds will only have themselves to blame if they continue to leak goals away from Grange Reserve, as the only top six side they travel to in the remaining matches will be Bulleen, who have just 17 goals of their own in 16 Vodafone Cup matches this season.

The player to watch for is the creative and clever Jim Latinopoulos, whose left foot should continue to provide assists for the clinical close-range finisher Curcija. A-League recruit and Chinese national Xiaobin Zhang will also bring a touch of class, and lethal long range shots to the midfield set up.

By Teo Pelizzetti

### LEADING GOAL SCORERS

- Michael Curcija 10
- Joe Spiteri 7
- Joe Di Iorio 3

## HEIDELBERG UTD WARRIORS FC



Coming off the back of a devastating Grand Final defeat, one would be mistaken for thinking Heidelberg United would stroll into the finals campaign the following season.

How wrong us so called experts were. Rocked by the news late in the pre-season that influential playmaker Bill Damianos had requested a transfer to the Oakleigh Cannons, the Bergers suddenly found themselves racing against the clock with the season opener looming. Coach Phil Stubbs was forced to react quickly to upgrade his midfield options and signed Aaron Westerveld from South Australia and Frank Lagana from Empoli to compensate the loss.

The interrupted pre-season activities also created some controversy in and around the club. Some queried the departure of young gun Brendan Beni to newly promoted Richmond, likewise with Venetian Korcarevski. The word out of the Village however, was that there was adequate cover for the departures.

Those concerns turned into problems when Heidelberg hosted fierce rivals South Melbourne on the opening day of the league, when a poor crowd turned out to witness South come away 2 nil victors. Although both goals came at the death, Heidelberg looked flat, unconvincing and lacked any real spark in the final third.

Their interrupted pre-season wasn't about to produce miracles with new signing Sarris Parisos struggling to settle in his new surroundings but perhaps the biggest worry for Alexander was their genuine lack of any real substance in the middle of the park. What was to follow was a string of poor results, winning only one of their next five and the threat of relegation rang loudly around The Village.

The Bergers needed a spark and when the chips are down, it's a proven leader that comes up trumps. So it was no surprise when club captain Eric Vassiliadis stepped up late on against Fawkner/Whittesea to kick-start Heidelberg's season. Just a week later, the boys played brilliantly to upset ladder leader Kingston City at The Village with club favourite Nick Marinos netting ten minutes from time to send the faithful into raptures.

The more promising news however for Alexander was the form of Sebastian Petrovich since crossing from South Melbourne pre-season and the permanent left sided role for Jim Drossos since arriving from the Cannons after his position at Oakleigh was made expendable due to their signing of Cameron Pino from Altona. Petrovich has impressed so far this season with his ball winning in the midfield and has great ability to run at defenders with his zipping speed, where as

Drossos is a breath of fresh air for the Bergers, finally being able to provide some delivery to the marksmen.

Just when you thought the season was cruising along for Alexander, a winless patch from four games, including a 4-1 home humiliation to the Sunshine Georgies, resulted in the club parting ways with head coach Phil Stubbs. His replacement would be assistant Con Pappas on a permanent basis, Pappas' coaching career didn't get off to the best of starts when once again The Bergers were humbled by South, this time by the tune of 3 goals to 1.

With the Melbourne Victory releasing Andy Vlahos out of his contract with the A League club, the board wasted no time in signing Vlahos as they were confident he could help turn their fortunes around. He played an influential role on a waterlogged Olympic Village and had ample support from Nick Marinos and Petrovich as Alexander stunned ladder leader Oakleigh on a night where only strokes of genius would get you the three points.

Vlahos turned it on again eight days later when his man of the match performance inspired Heidelberg to a heart stopping injury time win against the Bulleen Zebras at the Veneto Club. A Nick Sabljak free kick with virtually the last kick of the game sealed the match and sent the Berger contingent wild with exuberant celebrations.

Despite an indifferent start to the season, The Bergers cannot be disappointed with their current ladder position, which sees them sitting fifth, two points above the Melbourne Knights who are seventh. Not too many clubs can say they've parted company with their coach and are still in the top tier of the table. Real tests now appear though for Alexander with their next two home games being locked out due to earlier crowd disturbances.

I truly believe the result against the Zebras is the turning point for this soccer club and feel they can only improve on their current ladder position and once you're there come finals time, anything is possible. The Bergers next three games are against sides in the bottom four and will be encouraged to be picking up maximum points from these fixtures, starting with the Frankston Pines on 25th June.

By George Sahinidis & Phillip Foudoulis

### LEADING GOAL SCORERS

- Nick Marinos 6
- Nick Sabljak 3
- Eric Vassiliadis 3

## PRESTON LIONS FC



At best, Preston Lions' 2006 Vodafone Cup campaign could be described as a turbulent one thus far. Expectations for one of the league's proudest club was to be right up there and challenging for honours, however for most of the initial stages of the championship race found itself in unfamiliar territory, in last place and propping up the rest of the ladder. Surprisingly it took until round seven with

a 3-1 victory against Frankston Pines for the Lions to record its first win of the season, but not before we saw another coaching change in the league when Vlado Vanis surrendered his duties to crowd favourite Goran Lozanovski. On top of that the club was forced to switch its home games to Epping Stadium after Connor Reserve was deemed unfit to play on due to a damaged surface.

Since Lozanovski's appointment the team has slowly begun to climb towards the top six and may well yet prove to be a force to be reckoned with before the year is out. Johnny Sapozovski has returned to the fold after a short stint at Fawkner and the club also gained the services of Marinos Gasparis from Sunshine to bolster its ranks. The Lions always look threatening going forward with plenty of options with Anthony Magnacca's silky skills feeding the front runners and with a little tweaking at the back could still have a big say in who rules this year's Vodafone Cup.

### LEADING GOAL SCORERS

- Anthony Magnacca 8
- Nick Lazarevski 4
- Blaze Gjorgevski 2



# VODAFONE CUP

Realco



## SOUTH MELBOURNE FC



A third placed finish in their inaugural Premier League season in 2005, left South Melbourne coach John Anastasiadis aiming for a top two spot in 2006.

With just 10 rounds of the home and away competition to go, his team appears to be on target, having climbed to second spot. But it hasn't always

locked as promising for the Lakesiders, particularly when an early season slump saw the side win just two from seven matches after round two. The slump threatened their place in the top six, before some recent home victories righted the ship and fast tracked them back up the table.

Coach Anastasiadis believes a number of factors were responsible for the early season slump. One factor was the necessary adjustment period for pre-season recruits. "It doesn't exactly take overnight for the players to adapt to the way we play." He also believes that injuries to key players stalled his team's early progress. With injuries to key central defenders Con Blattis and Arthur Tsonis and the departure of Jonas Salley to the A-League, Anastasiadis had to revamp his defense.

"My backline this year hasn't been one of those experienced backlines but nevertheless the boys who came in did the job and performed well. At times, the backline had an average age of about 20 and to see these boys prosper is very gratifying. They've played a part too."

Anastasiadis admits that, at times, early in the season the side wasn't playing well. "I thought we were lacking in front of goal, which was our biggest problem." Recent results have seen South turn their biggest problem into their biggest asset.

A remarkable 21 goals in their last five matches must have other sides wondering what's in the water down at Bob Jane and opposition coaches thinking of ways to counter South's freescorers.

In fact, South's 32 goals this season tops the league's goal scoring charts and already surpasses the team's 30 goal tally for the entire 2005 season.

Anastasiadis explains a couple of factors that may be responsible for the turnaround in goalscoring. "When we were playing at the start of the season, when the boys were just getting through 2-1 and 1-0 results, we were creating lots of chances which for some reason, just weren't going in. This time it's changed. We're creating not as many chances but the chances we're creating are all going in. At training, we've worked hard at it, with extra sessions put on, concentrating on goal scoring. The boys are more composed in front of goals. They've got to believe in themselves. When they're in front of goals, they've got to believe it's going to go in."

Anastasiadis believes that the arrival of the three new Perth players in round nine has also made a difference in attitude, especially with one of them being a striker.

"That's put a bit of pressure on the forwards too."

They've obviously said "We've got to start performing" and they truly have. And you see that everyone now has a go. People like Kevin Nelson who was struggling. He's scored five goals in two games. That for us is great to see... To come to the break, sitting in second position, that's satisfying."

Despite the excellent recent form, a couple of question marks remain.

South may need to contemplate playing without the services of influential playmaker and leading goalscorer, Fernando De Moraes who recently trialled with Queensland Roar and has also reportedly attracted interest from a Greek first division club. Anastasiadis says,

"Fernando's availability is an unknown at the moment. I think we'll find out on Monday." The other question mark is South's poor away record having just won once, in eight away games, in season 2006. This is in stark contrast to their 100 percent home record.

Anastasiadis says,

"Some of our best games have been played away from home, but obviously we haven't been good enough in getting the score on the board. We'll certainly change a few things in the system, away from home and hopefully that will work for us for the remainder of the season."

If South Melbourne can pick up two or three wins on the road, and maintain their excellent home record, they should be able to consolidate their place in the top two.

### LEADING GOAL SCORERS

**Fernando de Moraes 8**  
**Kevin Nelson 7**  
**Vaughn Coveney 5**

## ESSENDON ROYALS FC



After 16 rounds of the Vodafone cup competition the Essendon Royals find themselves in 11th place and just above the drop zone. However, the league is so tight this year that with a couple of positive results the Royals could find themselves

right up there again and challenging for a top six final position.

The loss of last season's top goal scorer Michael Curcija to big spending rivals Kingston City has proved to be a harder task to find an equal replacement than perhaps first thought. Curcija finished 2005 with a total of 16 goals - the same return the Royals have been able to deliver so far this season.

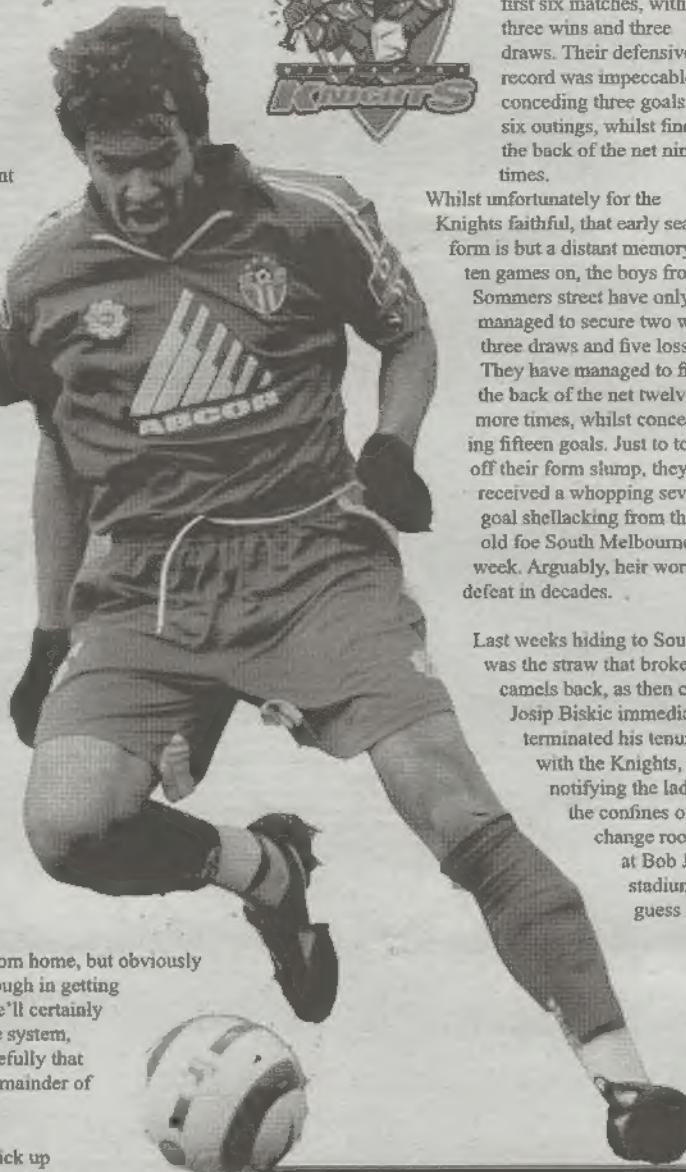
Whilst the club has been served well by impressive individual displays from the likes of Steve Fitzsimmons, youngster Frank Catalano, Serdar Pir, Henry Fa'arodo and Marko Sutalo in goals, the squad has remained as competitive as ever but unfortunately has lacked the firepower and edge to really penetrate and make a difference in front of goals.

Another coaching change during the course of the season probably didn't help proceedings either, as

Luciano Trani made way for David Winton. Royals' fans will be hoping the two week break the league has endured during the World Cup will provide Winton and the club with the perfect platform to rest, regroup and recharge as it prepares itself for a second half of the season assault on the run-in home.

**LEADING GOAL SCORERS**

**Henry Fa'arodo 3**  
**Len Catalano 2**  
**Michael Catalano 2**



## MELBOURNE KNIGHTS FC



The Knights looked like serious title contenders early on in the season, going undefeated in their first six matches, with three wins and three draws. Their defensive record was impeccable, conceding three goals in six outings, whilst finding the back of the net nine times.

Whilst unfortunately for the Knights faithful, that early season form is but a distant memory, as ten games on, the boys from Sommers street have only managed to secure two wins, three draws and five losses. They have managed to find the back of the net twelve more times, whilst conceding fifteen goals. Just to top off their form slump, they received a whopping seven goal shellacking from their old foe South Melbourne last week. Arguably, their worst defeat in decades.

Last weeks hiding to South was the straw that broke the camel's back, as then coach Josip Biskic immediately terminated his tenure with the Knights, notifying the lads in the confines of the change rooms at Bob Jane stadium. I guess the

irony is, that almost a year on, his second coaching stint with the Knights ended where it began, at Bob Jane stadium. Assistant Josip Spoljar for the interim has been installed as caretaker coach, as the VPL coaching merry-go-round takes its eighth turn of the season.

The question is, what does the future hold for the Knights for the remainder of the season?

Well after their implosion to South last week, not much. They struggle against classy opposition i.e. South, Kingston etc, even though they have displayed the required technical abilities early on in the season. Even if their were Eleven Guus Hiddink's on the bench against South, it would not have mattered at all, as the manner in which the boys capitulated had more to do about the commitment to each other and the shirt, rather than any coaching or tactical nous.

The contrast in their blistering early season form and last weeks insipidness raises more questions than answers. As it seems that the Knights are the Forrest Gump chocolates of the league "You never know which team you will get each week."

A finish between seventh and tenth is the most likely outcome for the Knights in season 2006. Potential squandered is a fitting description for the 2006 Knights.

By Bruno Zovko

### LEADING GOAL SCORERS

**Nathan Caldwell 6**  
**Andrew Barisic 3**  
**Dario Matkovic 3**

## FRANKSTON PINES FC



At the beginning of the season Frankston Pines were regarded by many to be one of the favourites for relegation from this year's Vodafone Cup. During the off season the club was busy in finding a replacement for well respected coach Stan Webster, who took the club from the State League First Division to a VPL Grand Final in successive seasons before departing Monterey Reserve for a new challenge at Dandenong Thunder.

The Pines embarked on the 2006 season in a determined fashion, defying its critics under new coach and ex-player Craig Lewis. After impressive victories against reigning champs Green Gully, Melbourne Knights and Sunshine Georgies as well as honorable draws with the likes of Heidelberg United and South Melbourne, the Pines were happily getting the points on the board nice and early, safely keeping itself above the relega-



tion zone.

Uncharacteristically, the club also delved heavily into the transfer market and sought itself three prized recruits in Dino Djulevic, Andreas Oliveira and Antonio Naglieri from Western Australia to bolster its squad. By round ten the first of a series of unforeseen off-field circumstances began to surface and the Peninsula club's promising start to the season soon began to look extremely vulnerable. Firstly, the trio from Perth dropped a bombshell on the club after being enticed by South Melbourne to join its ranks at the apparently more glamorous surrounds of Bob Jane. Little more than a fortnight later Craig Lewis announced that he'd been offered a job in Dubai that was "too good to refuse" and the proverbial wheels looked like they were starting to fall off the Pines' 2006 campaign. Former player and youth coach Adam Jamieson then took charge, only to be thrown into the deep end with his first game in charge ending in a 4-1 defeat to Oakleigh Cannons, who were at that time undefeated as well as the league leaders.

Just when things looked like it couldn't get any worse, over the last couple of weeks reports alleging the club found itself in a spot of financial bother began to surface, with no less than five players and the new coach ready to walk if certain obligations weren't kept.

After an extraordinary committee meeting at the club last Tuesday threatening issues were thankfully resolved and hopefully everyone at the Pines can get back to concentrating on playing football once again.

With ten rounds left to go and 30 points left to play for, final standings are far from being decided. The club has a reputation of battling against the odds and will look to players like Cam Leopold, Trent Malcolm, Michael Anderson, Cam Jones and the return from injury of Nick Waite to lead by example and show the way for the rest of the squad.

### LEADING GOAL SCORERS

**Cam Leopold 2**  
**Colin Stewart 2**  
**Nick Waite 2**



# STATE LEAGUES


**Seniors**
**NORTH WEST 2**
**Reserves**

Moreland City 2 Thomastown Devils 2 (HT: 2-1), Pascoe Vale 0 Lalor United 0 (HT: 0-0), Yarraville Glory 0 Kellar Park 0 (HT: 0-0), Maribyrnong Greens 2 (F Husonovic) Westgate 1 (G Olea) (HT: 0-0), Williamstown 0 Altona City 1 (M Cullen) (HT: 0-0), Banyule City 2 (S Pouniotis, W Sismanis) Westgate 3 (D Giogovac, D Murdaca, M Savic) (HT: 1-2)

Moreland City 3 Thomastown Devils 1, Pascoe Vale 2 Lalor United 2, Yarraville Glory 0 Kellar Park 3, Maribyrnong Greens 3 Westgate 5, Williamstown 2 Altona City 3, Banyule City 2 Westgate 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Westgate FC	11	8	1	2	25	12	25
Lalor United SC	11	7	2	2	13	8	23
Altona City SC	11	7	2	2	13	8	23
Pascoe Vale SC	11	6	3	2	17	5	21
Kellar Park SC	11	6	3	2	18	14	21
Williamstown SC	11	5	1	5	14	10	16
Yarraville Glory FC	11	2	6	3	7	14	12
Thomastown Devils SC	11	2	5	4	10	13	11
Maribyrnong Greens SC	11	3	2	6	11	19	11
Banyule City SC	11	2	2	7	18	23	8
Westgate SC	11	2	1	8	14	27	7
Moreland City SC	11	1	2	8	7	35	15

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Moreland City SC	11	6	5	0	25	11	23
Pascoe Vale SC	11	6	3	2	17	13	21
Kellar Park SC	11	5	5	1	23	11	20
Thomastown Devils SC	11	5	4	2	18	14	19
Lalor United SC	11	5	3	3	22	20	18
Altona City SC	10	4	3	3	17	10	15
Maribyrnong Greens SC	11	4	3	4	20	21	15
Yarraville Glory FC	10	4	2	4	17	21	14
Westgate SC	11	3	2	6	11	22	11
Williamstown SC	11	2	3	6	14	16	9
Banyule City SC	11	1	4	6	18	25	7
Moreland City SC	11	1	1	9	11	28	4

**Seniors**
**NORTH WEST 3**
**Reserves**

North Sunshine Eagles 1 (C Macedo) Sydenham Park 2 (G Patravski 2) (HT: 0-1), Geelong Rangers 1 (D Corry) Ballarat Soccer Club 3 (R Rykers, S Digrizamo, P McClelland) (HT: 1-1), Albion Rovers 0 Werribee City 0 (HT: 0-0); Lalor 0 (D Jovic, S Kocdevren, D Christou) La Trobe University 0 (HT: 2-0), Western Eagles 0 Geelong 2 (B Lebas, R Georgiakas) (HT: 0-1), Sunbury United 5 (V Ierardo, V Kalayci, A Kalayci, D Gray) Corio 2 (S Givinski, A Blundo) (HT: 3-0)

North Sunshine Eagles 1 Sydenham Park 2, Geelong Rangers 4 Ballarat Soccer Club 6, Albion Rovers 4 Werribee City 2, Lalor 1 La Trobe University 1, Western Eagles 0 Geelong 1, Sunbury United 2 Corio 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Werribee City SC	11	10	1	0	27	2	31
Sunbury United SC	11	9	1	1	28	8	28
Corio SC	11	5	2	4	17	16	17
Albion Rovers SC	11	4	3	4	24	17	18
Geelong Rangers SC	11	5	1	5	19	18	16
La Trobe University SO	11	5	1	5	24	25	16
Lalor SC	11	4	2	5	18	14	14
Ballarat Soccer Club	11	3	4	4	14	16	13
Sydenham Park SC	11	4	1	6	15	25	13
Geelong SC	11	3	2	6	19	20	11
North Sunshine Eagles SO	11	2	1	8	14	31	7
Western Eagles SC	11	2	0	9	5	26	6

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Lalor SC	11	8	2	1	29	8	26
Sunbury United SC	11	8	0	3	21	10	24
Ballarat Soccer Club	11	7	0	4	27	17	21
La Trobe University SC	11	6	2	3	22	17	20
Geelong Rangers SC	11	5	3	3	25	20	18
Geelong SC	11	5	2	4	18	16	17
Albion Rovers SC	11	5	2	4	15	17	17
Corio SC	10	4	3	3	19	20	15
Sydenham Park SC	10	3	1	6	11	20	10
North Sunshine Eagles SC	10	2	1	7	12	21	7
Werribee City SC	11	2	0	9	11	32	6
Western Eagles SC	10	1	0	9	52	1	3

**Seniors**
**PROVI 1 NORTH WEST**
**Reserves**

Darebin United 0 Hume United 2 (H Andrade, J Barriontos) (HT: 0-2), Glenroy 1 (S Bebic) Elwood City 0 (HT: 1-0), Melbourne City 0 Avondale Heights 1 (M Calandrelli) (HT: 0-1), Hoppers Crossing 3 (V Honors, Z Tountas) Laverton Park 4 (V De La Plaza, J Marambio) (HT: 2-3), Mill Park 3 Brimbank 2 (HT: 2-1), Plenty Valley Lions 2 (C Nikoleidis 2) Melbourne University Rangers 1 (A Griffin) (HT: 0-1)

Templestowe Eagles 2 Mooroolbark 3, Sandringham City 3 Monbulk 1, Fitzroy City 1 Berwick City 6, Morwell Pegasus 3 Heatherton United 3, Frankston Strikers 0 Nunawading City 1, North Caulfield 5 Endeavour United 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Plenty Valley Lions FC	11	8	2	1	20	6	28
Melbourne University	11	6	3	2	20	10	21
Laverton Park SC	11	6	3	2	25	22	21
Avondale Heights SC	11	5	3	2	25	11	18
Hume United SC	11	5	3	2	17	11	18
Hoppers Crossing SC	11	5	3	3	31	21	18
Glenroy SC	11	5	3	3	20	15	18
Darebin United SC	11	4	3	17	14	14	14
Elwood City SC	11	4	2	5	22	18	14
Melbourne City SC	11	2	3	6	19	28	7
Mill Park SC	11	1	0	10	7	45	3
Brimbank SC	11	0	1	10	10	40	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Hume United SC	11	0	1	13	14	10	28
Melbourne University	11	8	2	1	29	8	26
Plenty Valley Lions FC	11	7	2	2	28	13	23
Hoppers Crossing SC	11	6	2	3	29	21	20
Elwood City SC	11	5	2	4	28	22	19
Avondale Heights SC	11	5	3	3	25	19	18
Glenroy SC	11	4	3	4	29	21	15
Laurelton Park SC	11	2	2	6	18	24	9
Darebin United SC	11	2	2	7	15	42	6
Melbourne City SC	11	1	4	6	18	31	7
Mill Park SC	11	1	0	10	7	48	3
Brimbank SC	11	0	2	9	10	36	2

**Seniors**
**PROVI 2 NORTH WEST**
**Reserves**

Northern Falcons 1 (A Ferrante) South Yarra 2 (P Rilchie, S Thoman) (HT: 0-0),



# STATE LEAGUE ONE

Round 11



## STATE ONE REACHES HALF WAY MARK

As the Vodafone Cup takes the second week of its midseason sabbatical, Division One again takes centre stage as the main event in Victoria football and there was a weekend of games which didn't disappoint.

Saturday saw a battle of two high flyers as Western Suburbs made the trip down the Princes Highway to Lara to lock horns with the North Geelong Warriors. After a plucky first half which saw the home side lead two goals to one at the break the visiting Suburbs side did as they have done much of the season, they dug deep and scored the only goal of the second half to see themselves grab a share of the spoils and keep themselves well in contention for one of the top two spots.

Meanwhile Saturday also saw Altona East travel to Dunstan Reserve in Brunswick to face Brunswick City. It proved to be an exciting contest and both sides showed glimpses of form which they possess and it was a first half goal by sharp little striker Benjamin Stafrace that decided the issue in favor of the home side. A good result for Brunswick, which maintains it in fourth spot and keeps it right in the promotion mix, while for Altona it once again failed to improve themselves and remain lower mid table and will need points to keep the teams below them at bay.

The mountain breeze cleared the path for Nikolaos Papadopoulos to hit the only goal of the game in the second half as the visiting Springvale White Eagles made the short trip to the George Andrews Reserve to defeat The Dandenong Thunder. The victory keeps the White Eagles firmly in second spot and in the path to promotion at this stage. As for the Thun-



Mihat Buyuk gets the ball away despite the desperate lunge by Jason Dimozantos

der they remain rooted to the bottom of the ladder and need to start to get a move on or division two SE soccer beckons in 2007.

The final Saturday game saw Langwarrin welcome the Port Melbourne Sharks to Lawton Reserve and sent them home with three goals bulging their net as Caleb Nichols scored two goals and Trent Fairclough scored in the home side's 3-0 victory. Goal-freak Caleb Nichols consistently seems to find a

way to find way to the net and this is a win, which keeps Langwarrin fifth and in amongst the action. Meanwhile Port is in mid table and while this result doesn't help them they want to keep seeking points to maintain their position.

Sunday also saw St Albans travel to the John Cain Reserve to take on Northcote City and the game saw the host head into the break leading one goal to nil on a goal by Trent Rixon, this was to be a false dawn for the struggling Northcote City side as two goals by Josip Loncaric in the second stanza saw the visiting side record a two 2-0 victory. Northcote remains second last and unless they can start to get results may well stay there. St Albans sit sixth and while a game behind fifth place and over three games behind the leaders need results to challenge the top and avoid the pack below them.

The final game saw North Coburg finally show a glimpse of their true potential as they welcomed Bentleigh Greens to Reddish Reserve and soundly dispatched them by four goals to one in a clinical display outlining the potential that exists at this club and a potential that belies their ladder position. The game was tied at one at the half time interval was taken over completely by the home side who in the end ran out easy winners, Grant Mussel, Steven Manchevski and Bosin Gorcevski were amongst the goals for the Home Side whilst Ahmet Gurpinar scored the lone Greens goal.

By Reuben Schembri



### STATE ONE SENIORS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Springvale White Eagles SC	11	6	3	2	14	11	21
North Geelong Warriors SC	10	5	4	1	25	14	19
Western Suburbs SC	11	5	4	2	12	10	19
Brunswick City SC	11	5	3	3	22	22	18
Langwarrin SC	11	4	5	2	18	11	17
St. Albans Saints SC	11	4	5	2	13	9	17
Port Melbourne Sharks SC	11	3	4	4	16	18	13
North Coburg United SC	10	3	3	4	17	12	12
Altona East Phoenix SC	11	2	5	4	6	11	11
Bentleigh Greens SC	11	2	4	5	14	16	10
Northcote City SC	11	2	2	7	9	19	8
Dandenong Thunder SC	11	2	2	7	8	21	8

North Geelong Warriors 2  
Western Suburbs 2 (HT: 2-1),  
Brunswick City 1  
(B Stafrace)  
Altona East Phoenix 0 (HT: 1-0),  
Dandenong Thunder 0  
Springvale White Eagles 1  
(N Papadopoulos) (HT: 0-0),  
Langwarrin 3  
(T Fairclough, C Nicholes 2)  
Port Melbourne 0 (HT: 1-0),  
Northcote City 1 (T Rixon) St.  
Albans Saints 2 (J Loncaric 2)  
(HT: 1-0),  
North Coburg United 4  
(G Mussel, B Gorcevski, S  
Manchevski)  
Bentleigh Greens 1  
(A Gurpinar) (HT: 1-1)

### STATE ONE RESERVES

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Western Suburbs SC	11	8	1	2	26	9	25
Springvale White Eagles SC	11	7	3	1	29	14	24
Langwarrin SC	10	6	3	1	28	15	21
Dandenong Thunder SC	11	6	0	5	23	14	18
Brunswick City SC	10	5	3	2	21	15	18
Bentleigh Greens SC	10	4	2	4	18	19	14
Northcote City SC	9	4	1	4	19	17	13
Port Melbourne Sharks SC	10	3	1	6	18	24	10
North Geelong Warriors SC	10	2	2	6	15	24	8
St. Albans Saints SC	9	2	1	6	10	25	7
Altona East Phoenix SC	11	1	3	7	10	25	6
North Coburg United SC	8	2	0	6	8	24	6

### ROUND 12 FIXTURE

PORT MELBOURNE  
V  
SPRINGVALE WHITE EAGLES  
SS Anderson Reserve  
Port Melb MEL: 56 K1  
Friday 23rd June  
KO 8.30pm

DANDELONG THUNDER  
V  
ALTONA EAST PHOENIX  
George Andrews Reserve  
Dandenong MEL: 90 D11  
Saturday 24th June  
KO 8.30pm

BRUNSWICK CITY  
V  
BENTLEIGH GREENS  
Dunstan Reserve  
B'wick East MEL: 29 B4  
Saturday 24th June  
KO 3pm

NTH GEELONG WARRIORS  
V  
ST ALBANS SAINTS  
Elcho Park  
Lara MEL: 608 D15  
Saturday 24th June  
KO 3pm

NTH COBURG LTD  
V  
WESTERN SUBURBS  
Reddish Reserve  
Glenroy MEL: 17 E4  
Sunday 25th June  
KO 3pm

NORTHCOTE CITY  
V  
LANGWARRIN  
Reddish Reserve  
John Cain Memorial Park  
Sunday 25th June  
KO 3pm

North Geelong 0  
Western Suburbs 1,  
Brunswick City 1  
Altona East Phoenix 1,  
Dandenong Thunder 0  
Springvale 3,  
Langwarrin 2  
Port Melbourne 2,  
Northcote City  
St. Albans Saints ,  
North Coburg United  
Bentleigh Greens



# BOO'S WORLD



This is shaping up as the best World Cup in some time. Australia actually being in it helps. There have been plenty of long range goals and exciting finishes.

Italy v USA was the height of drama, Danielle De Rossi getting a solid elbow in on Brian McBride who bled like Ric Flair v Hulk Hogan at WCW Uncensored 1999. This came less than a minute after Cristian Zaccardo's own goal equaliser. The referee, a perhaps keen to make everyone aware there was a Uruguayan at this World Cup, went on to send off another



Some of Boo's work at the World Cup

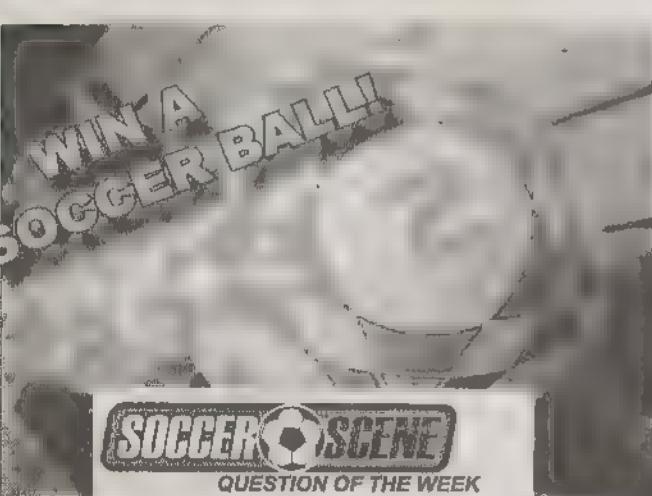
two players. Group D is wide open now, unlike Group C which was widely considered THE group of death. The deaths came pretty swiftly in Group C. Cote d'Ivoire and Serbia and Montenegro were dispatched hastily, with the S&M boys being dealt with pretty brutally by the Argies, the kind of flogging that is usually only experienced by the Saudi Arabians.

England are playing pretty poorly but gaining results. The charismatic, talismanic and part-robotic striker Peter Crouch is leading the way for them whilst Steven Gerrard is eagerly anticipating the knock-out stages where his last minute 30 yard screamers will really come into their own.

Iran have showed the football world it has nothing to fear, their only threat remains trying to establish a nuclear arsenal. Angola play Iran with a chance to pip Mexico for second in Group D if they win. The football world fears Angola, more for the Ebola virus than their efforts on the park though.

Forget new ball technology, the greatest innovation in recent World Cups has been "World Cup Babes In Bodypaint". Bodypainting team kits onto naked models is surely the greatest job anyone could have in the world, and you probably don't even need university qualifications.

I wonder if the noted drug dealer Ebeneezer Goode, as sung about by The Shamen in 1992 ever played football. A bloke like him sounds like an asset to any squad. "But if you know Eezer he's a real crowd pleaser" certainly sounds promising, and "Backwards and then forwards, forwards and then backwards, Eezer is the geezer who loves to muscle in" hints that he may have been handy in a holding midfield role. "Though very much maligned and misunderstood" would suggest he would have been the target of the English tabloids.



Thanks to Melbourne's newest soccer depot, Soccer Scene, Goal! Weekly will be giving away a Patrick soccer ball each week to the first correct entry of the Soccer Scene "Question of the Week."

**This week's question is:**  
How many times have Brazil won the World Cup?

Send in your entry today to:  
[competition@goalweekly.com](mailto:competition@goalweekly.com)

Until next week,

FIRE UP AUSTRALIA!



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## ON THE BOX

### The FFV Football Show

Channel 31

Wednesday, 8.30pm

Featuring Vodafone Cup highlights with Ross Atletis

### The Green Gully Soccer Show

Channel 31

Saturdays, 10.30am

### The World Game

SBS

Sundays, 2pm - 5.30pm

## Career Opportunities

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## ON THE AIRWAVES

### The 90th Minutes

9EN 1118

5pm onwards  
Vera Zappone and Socceroo legend Paul Trimboli

### Monday Night Football

96.5 Inner FM

Mondays 8pm

Featuring coverage of the Vodafone Cup with John Caniglia

### GOAL!

Saturday, 3-4 pm  
Hosted by Chris Vernuccio with Jim Peltz and Steve Sarge  
Featuring weekly updates on the 2006 World Cup

## FOOTBALL FUNNIES

Daniel Alsop's wife wanted him locked up - she had had enough of the eejit So she went to the police and told them: "Please Help, my husband has been hitting me." The Police gave sound advice "Ma'm, don't worry Just carry a goalpost in each hand - I guarantee he'll never hit you."

Q: What do you call a NZ Knights fan with many girlfriends? A: A Shepherd

Q: What have General Pinochet and Melbourne Victory have in common?  
A: They both round people up into football stadiums and torture them.

## QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1 Kaka
- 2 AC Milan
- 3 Cagliari
- 4 Juventus
- 5 Pele (58, 62, 66 & 70)
- 6 1954
- 7 Carlos Alberto Perreira
- 8 Them Marmite
- 9 Flamengo
- 10 The beautiful game

# GiveMeFootball

96.5 Inner FM Monday 8pm

Vodafone Cup  
Monday Night Football  
with John Caniglia

Tuesday 20 June

# 2006 FIFA WORLD CUP

# Germany

## ECUADOR BREEZES INTO SECOND ROUND



### Ecuador 3 - 0 Costa Rica

HAMBURG- For the first time ever, Ecuador advanced to the knockout rounds of the World Cup thanks to their 3-0 victory over Costa Rica in Group A.

The result also booked the passage of Germany to the Round of 16, while Costa Rica and Poland are now officially out of contention.

The Ecuadorians struck very quickly, putting the Costa Ricans into shell shock, with Carlos Tenorio grabbing his second goal of the tournament after just eight minutes

1-0 Carlos Tenorio 8th minute

Tenorio got inside the Costa Rica defenders with a run up the middle and headed a perfect cross by Luis Valencia and the ball went right into the back of the net with José Porras helpless.

Four minutes later, in a bid to further extend their lead, Ecuador won a free kick in a dangerous spot and Edison Méndez put a nice shot on it, but the ball was right at Porras

Costa Rica were lacking ideas after the goal, but Rónald Gómez made a nice pass up the middle looking for the run of Paulo Wanchope, but it was just overhit and allowed Ecuador goalkeeper Cristian Mora to gather. Unimpressed by his side's attack, Costa Rica coach Alexandre Guimaraes took midfielder Danny Fonseca out after 30 minutes, and replaced him with striker Álvaro Sabonio.

Méndez, in the 35th minute, had another dangerous free kick effort, but this time the ball sailed just high over the bar from the left flank.

The Costa Ricans finally tested Mora five minutes from half-time, although it was only a distance shot by Mauricio Solis that Mora handled with ease

Saborio then missed a golden chance in the 42nd minute to equalize as a perfect cross to the far post from the left by Saborio found an unmarked Douglas Sequeira, but he hit his header wide

Into injury time, a cross from the left found the run of Agustín Delgado, but he only scuffed a shot wide when he probably should have made it 2-0.

Valencia sent in dangerous crosses from the right side all day, and one found its way to Delgado in the 53rd minute at the far post, but his volley effort was stopped by Porras.

2-0 Agustín Delgado 54th minute

But he wouldn't miss a minute later when he chested down a nice flick by Méndez and fired inside the near post of Porras, giving Ecuador a two-goal lead, and it looked like the goal that secured their progress.

Right on the hour mark, Gómez took the ball on the halfway line and made a sensational run through the Ecuador defense all the way into the area, but his shot was knocked away by Mora.

Substitute Iván Kaviedes thought he had made it 3-0 to Ecuador, but his goal was disallowed when he stuck in offside by about a half yard in the 70th minute.

Carlos Hernández, a known distance shot specialist for Costa Rica, tried his luck from 25 yards in the 73rd minute, but it was wide of the goalpost with Mora stretched out to cover it.

Ecuador were not intent on sitting on their lead, as

shown in the 79th minute when Kaviedes had a crack at goal after a nice run into the area, but a charging Porras cut down the angle and saved.

Kaviedes had another chance to extend the lead in the 84th minute when Méndez's right wing cross to the far post found the striker in space, but he blasted his header off the mark.

Costa Rica nearly were thrown a lifeline with three minutes to play when a ball laid off in the area was shot toward the back post by Saborio, but it came back off the crossbar.

3-0 Iván Kaviedes 90th minute + 2

Ecuador then capped off the match and sparked the celebrations when a beautiful cross from the right by Méndez found a charging Kaviedes who slotted home to set off jubilation from the fans in yellow. Despite having already advanced, Germany and Ecuador will meet in a vital game to decide who wins the group. Ecuador can clinch first place in the group by earning a draw in the game as they have the superior goal differential.

By Stephen Sharpe

### Germans Ponder On Second Round

BERLIN- Germany team manager and former international Oliver Bierhoff has stated that he would rather not meet England in the second round of the World Cup.

England meet Sweden on June 20, needing just a draw to finish top of Group B.

Germany, who defeated Costa Rica 4-2 and Poland 1-0 on an extra-time goal from Oliver Neuville, meet undefeated Ecuador after that afternoon, with the winner finishing top of Group A.

Germany and England, long-time rivals, could meet one another in the next round if one finishes first and the other second in their respective groups.

"I would prefer to play Sweden or Paraguay rather than England, who remain favourites to win Group B," Bierhoff said

"But then again a big win early in the knock-out stages could give us a major confidence booster for the remaining matches."

Responding to criticism that Germany has not played and defeated a top international opponent since, oddly



enough, England in October 2000, Bierhoff said "There is a lot of talk about us not having beaten a big nation for such a long time," said Bierhoff.

"But we are convinced that we can defeat every team. Now that we have seen all teams that are in the tournament we are not scared of anyone."

By Francisco Barreto

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Ecuador	2	2	0	0	5	0	6
Germany	2	2	0	0	5	2	6
Poland	2	0	0	2	0	3	0
Costa Rica	2	0	0	2	2	7	0

June 20	Ecuador	Germany
June 20	Poland	Costa Rica
June 15	Ecuador	Costa Rica
June 14	Germany	Poland
June 9	Poland	Ecuador
June 9	Germany	Costa Rica

### England leaves it late but squeezes through



England celebrates after booking their place in the second round

### England 2 - 0 Trinidad & Tobago

NUREMBERG- After 83 minutes of missed chances, England finally broke through and advanced to the Round of 16 with a 2-0 victory over Trinidad & Tobago in Nuremberg

Left-back Jamie Carragher, starting in place of Gary Neville, had the first shot on goal in the game in the second minute when he received the ball from Steven Gerrard, but his left-footed shot failed to trouble Shaka Hislop

Frank Lampard then forced Hislop into action four minutes later with a powerful drive from 25 yards that the West Ham goalkeeper parried right into the path of Michael Owen, but he didn't react quickly enough and shot wide when he should have made it 1-0.

After a corner kick by David Beckham in the 12th minute, England were just one touch away from scoring as the ball was played back into the area by Joe Cole, but no one was able to get on the end of it.

Cole then created Peter Crouch's first scoring opportunity

tunity as a cross coming in from deep on the left find the sliding Liverpool forward at the far post, but Hislop got a hand to the shot

Densill Theobald conceded a free kick on the edge of the area when he held back Gerrard from running onto a pass, earning him a booking, but Beckham's free kick was right into the wall

Despite all their possession, England were resorting mostly to efforts from distance, much like the one in the 33rd minute when Gerrard fired high after a short corner.

However, Lampard nearly gave England the lead with a shot from 25 yards in the 35th minute, but with Hislop at full stretch the ball hooked wide of the post

Trinidad then threatened

on a corner kick in the 36th minute as Yorke's effort played to the back post found the head of a flying Stern John, but his shot was wide with Paul Robinson having vacated his goal.

Another set piece provided the islanders a chance to threaten the goal as Yorke's free kick into the area was headed over the top by an unchallenged Kenwyne Jones

Lampard should have done better in the 41st minute when he was unmarked in the center of the area after a pass from Owen near the byline, but he ballooned his shot over.

A minute later, Crouch also missed terribly in the area after Beckham's ball. Rather than control it, Crouch attempted a first-time shot that missed well wide.

But Trinidad were very nearly in the lead in the 45th minute as Robinson went out to challenge and left the goal open, but Stern John's header was cleared off the line by John Terry, preserving the lead and sparing big blushes for England.

Terry had to be alert again in the 53rd minute as Jones made a fine run into the area on a ball by Chris Birchall, but the Chelsea captain was able to cut it out just before the Southampton striker could control

Owen should have scored in the 56th minute when he had a free header off of a Beckham free kick, but it missed just wide with the near side of the goal wide open.

Desperately needing an attacking boost, Sven-Göran Eriksson brought on Wayne Rooney in the 58th minute for Owen and midfielder Aaron Lennon replaced Carragher

Crouch misfired again in the 69th minute as a cross by Lennon find the lanky striker at the far post, but it was over the bar and England's frustrations were elongated.

After having appeals for a handball in the area turned down, England missed another chance as Lampard had a shot in the area go high in the 75th minute.

Substitute Cornell Glen then put on a show as he took on two England defenders from the halfway line all the way to the edge of the area before he Ferdinand was able to touch the ball to Robinson

Lampard seemed to be having troubles finishing as

he was played in nicely by Crouch from the top of the area, but his snapshot was nicely stopped by Hislop in the 78th minute.

The Chelsea midfielder then hit a turning shot just wide

from inside the area just a minute later. With 10 minutes to go, John did well to control a free kick off of his chest and he hit a turning shot weakly wide.

1-0 Peter Crouch 83rd minute

Finally, though, England found the breakthrough as a cross from the right by converted right-back Beckham found the tall forward at the far post and he rose above Brent Sancho to head inside the near post

2-0 Steven Gerrard 90th minute + 1

Gerrard then put the game beyond doubt with a glorious left-footed strike that hooked inside Hislop's far post

Trinidad thought they had a goal back when John flicked in a Glen pass just in front of the six-yard box, but a dubious offside call cancelled it out.

By Stephen Sharpe

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
England	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Sweden	2	1	1	0	1	0	6
T & T	2	0	1	1	0	2	1
Paraguay	2	0	0	2	0	2	0
June 20		Paraguay		T & T			
June 20		Sweden		England			
June 15		Sweden		Paraguay			
June 15		England		T & T			
June 10		T & T		Sweden			
June 10		England		Paraguay			

# Argentina Takes Serbs To School

GELSENKIRCHEN- Argentina put one foot into the Round of 16 on Friday as they scored early and never looked back in a 6-0 rout of Serbia & Montenegro in Group C play.

## 1-0 Maxi Rodriguez 6th minute

The Argentinians struck very quickly as Javier Saviola controlled on the left and hit a perfect pass into the area for the run of Maxi Rodriguez whose first time poke went right into the net.

Predrag Djordjevic tried to rally his team and get the Serbs on the board in the 10th minute when he turned to shoot from the top of the area, but it was wide.

Argentina then lost Luis González to a leg injury in the 17th minute forcing Esteban Cambiasso, who started against Côte d'Ivoire, to come on and he slotted into his normal holding slot.

For the first 28 minutes, Argentina mainly looked dead on set pieces, but finally Juan Román Riquelme received a ball in open play and fired a shot, but it sailed high.

## 2-0 Esteban Cambiasso 31st minute

Open play then saw Argentina put one foot in the Round of 16 after a brilliant one-two between Hernán Crespo and the substitute Cambiasso led to the latter receiving a cheeky backheel and firing high into the goal.

Crespo thought he had a third goal in the 37th minute when he had beaten the offside trap and raced in alone on goal, but the assistant dubiously raised the flag and Crespo earned a booking for dissent.

## 3-0 Maxi Rodriguez 41st minute

The third goal came after brilliance from Saviola, who stripped the ball from Mladen Krstajic, beat a defender into the area and crossed for Crespo who fanned, but Rodriguez tucked it in at the far post.

The Serbs came out really quickly in the second half



as captain Savo Milosevic looked dangerous from 20 yards, but his shot was just wide.

Crespo showed a bit of imagination when he made a nice cutback move in the 51st minute after running out of space on the left, creating a shooting lane but it was right at Dragoslav Jevrić.

A nice counterattack by the Serbs sparked by Daniel

lungen into Javier Mascherano with both feet studs up. Crespo likely should have won a penalty in the 74th minute when he went down in the area after another flowing move by Argentina, but the referee waved away the claims.

Shortly after, the much-heralded Lionel Messi came on for the first time in the World Cup, replacing two-goal scorer Rodríguez.

## 4-0 Hernán Crespo 78th minute

Messi then made his impact felt as he raced into the area on the left and sent a low cross to the far post for Crespo to run onto and touch into the net for Argentina's fourth of the match.

## 5-0 Carlos Tévez 84th minute

Another player in his World Cup debut, Carlos Tévez, brilliantly beat Goran Gavranović and Igor Duljaj on the left and then curled a shot nicely past Jevrić inside the far post for a fifth.

Crespo then nearly had his second of the game in the 88th minute had it not been for a nice save by Jevrić after a nice pass by Tévez.

## 6-0 Lionel Messi 88th minute

It then went beyond ridiculous with two minutes to play as Tévez played a beautiful ball through to the charging Messi and the youngster also got on the scoreboard as the ball went right through the legs of Jevrić. The Argentinians will advance to the next round if the Netherlands manage to get a point against Côte d'Ivoire later on Friday. Serbia & Montenegro would also be eliminated in that scenario.

By Stephen Sharpe

## Holland Guarantees Place In Second Round



STUTTGART, Jun 16 (SW) - The Netherlands are through to the next round after a 2-1 win over Côte d'Ivoire, with first-half goals from Robin van Persie and Ruud van Nistelrooy.

Côte d'Ivoire had an opportunity in the fourth minute when Didier Drogba received a long pass, controlled it with his hand but was allowed to continue, but then found no teammate in front of the goal.

A minute later, the Dutch had their first chance when a cross from Mark van Bommel was only just missed by Ruud van Nistelrooy's head.

The Netherlands continued to dominate for a few minutes, but then it was Côte d'Ivoire's turn to spend some time on the Dutch half.

In the final minutes of regular time, the Netherlands seemed to be taking the initiative again and Van der Vaart found himself with a chance to shoot in the 89th minute, but couldn't use his force enough to threaten the keeper.

In the very last minute, the Ivoirians got a free kick outside the area, as Cocu fouled Aruna Dindane, but the attempt went well over and wide. The final whistle sounded immediately and the Netherlands join Argentina in the next round.

Ljuboja created their best scoring chance of the day in the 55th minute, but a header back across goal from Ljuboja's cross was just errant that enough that an open Milosevic couldn't get a head to it.

Frustration then set in on 66 minutes when Serbia & Montenegro striker Mateja Kezman was shown a straight red card by referee Roberto Rosetti when he

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Argentina	2	2	0	0	8	1	6
Holland	2	-	2	0	3	1	6
Ivory Coast	2	0	0	2	2	4	0
Serbia	2	0	0	2	0	7	0

June 21	Netherlands	Argentina
June 21	Ivory Coast	Serbia
June 16	Netherlands	Ivory Coast
June 16	Argentina	Serbia
June 10	Argentina	Ivory Coast
June 10	Netherlands	Serbia

## Portugal goes through as Mexico slips against Angola



FRANKFURT, Jun 17 (SW)

- Two second-half goals propelled Portugal to a 2-0 victory over Iran on Saturday, putting them into the Round of 16 of the World Cup and sending Iran out of the tournament.

Portugal took the first shot in the sixth minute as Cristiano Ronaldo laid the ball off to Maniche who shot high, and the Dynamo Moscow midfielder then shot wide after Luis Figo played the ball to him off of a corner.

Defender Miguel then turned on the flair in the 10th minute when he made a fine run into the area on the right after working around two Iranian defenders, but he lost the ball and Iran cleared.

A free kick swung into the area from the right provided Iran their first shot in the 12th minute, but Javad Nekounam's glancing header went wide.

Figo then centered the ball into the area for Deco a minute later, but the playmaker's shot was tipped over the top by goalkeeper Ebrahim Mirzapour.

A nice buildup by Iran in the 15th minute saw Mehrzad Madanchi get on the end of a long ball at the edge of the penalty area and, despite controlling well, he couldn't get off much of a shot and the ball rolled through to Portugal goalkeeper Ricardo.

Figo's free kick from the right in the 16th minute found an advancing Maniche who fired a shot that looked like trouble, but it hit defender Rahman Rezaei and went out for a corner.

In the 29th minute, Ricardo Carvalho rose highest to get his head to a Figo corner kick, but the ball skipped wide of the far post. Five minutes later, another Figo corner was headed toward goal by Cristiano Ronaldo, but the ball is cleared.

A minute later, Ronaldo took a crack at goal from the edge of the penalty area that looked like it had Mirzapour in trouble, but the ball flew narrowly wide of the post.



With just a minute left to play in the first half, Miguel raced into the area again and shot from a tight angle, but after Mirzapour got a touch to it, the ball went straight across the face of goal and out for a corner. A cross in the 54th minute by Nuno Valente toward the center of the area picked out striker Pauleta, but Portugal's all-time leading scorer could do nothing more than put it wide.

Portugal controlled the possession early in the second half, much like they did in the first, and Ronaldo came close to scoring again in the 55th minute as he hit a turning shot off his left-foot in the area, but Mirzapour did well to save at the near post.

## 1-0 Deco 63rd minute

But the Iberian nation finally got on the scoreboard with a cracking goal as Figo took the ball on the left, cut back

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Portugal	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Mexico	2	1	1	0	3	1	3
Angola	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Iran	2	0	0	2	1	5	0

June 21	Portugal	Mexico
June 21	Iran	Angola
June 17	Portugal	Iran
June 16	Mexico	Angola
June 15	Angola	Portugal
June 11	Mexico	Iran

toward the middle and laid the ball off for Deco who hit a stinging drive from 25 yards beyond a rooted Mirzapour for a stunning opener.

Two minutes later, Ronaldo came close to a second when a free kick from just outside the area on the left ran just wide of the far post, but the pace of the ball was too quick for Pauleta to get a touch to it.

Iran substitute Rasoul Khatibi then came agonizingly close to an equalizer in the 69th minute as he latched onto a ball in the area behind the Portuguese defense, but his shot went across the face of goal and just barely went past the far post.

Nine minutes later, Iran came close again to leveling the match as Ferydoon Zandi's cross was headed toward goal by Vahid Hashemian, but Ricardo did well to make

the save.

But, shortly after, Yahya Golmohammadi brought Luis Figo down in the area earning a penalty for the Portuguese.

## 2-0 Cristiano Ronaldo 80th minute

And Ronaldo stepped up to the spot and sent Mirza pour the wrong way, all but sealing the match and sending Portugal through to the next round.

Ronaldo, who had come so close all night up until the penalty, came very close again with a free kick from the right side, but again the ball skipped wide of the post.



GOAL WEEKLY  
2006 FIFA WORLD CUP

THE GREATS, THE  
AND THE GLAMOUR  
THE GREATEST SHOW



GOALS  
URS AT  
ON EARTH

# Ghana Upsets Czech, USA Still In With Chance



**COLOGNE**- After such an impressive performance in their opening match, the Czech Republic took a huge step back on Saturday after being beaten 2-0 by a superior Ghana side.

**0-1 Asamoah Gyan 2nd minute**

The Ghanians got off to an absolutely flying start as Asamoah Gyan controlled well off his chest from a Stephen Appiah pass before firing a perfectly placed shot low beyond Petr Cech for Ghana's first-ever World Cup goal.

Four minutes later, the Czechs tried to come up with a quick response as defender Marek Jankulovski tried a shot from 25 yards, but the ball skipped wide of the post. Jaroslav Plasil then fired high from outside the area three minutes later.

Pavel Nedved then hit a thunderous drive from outside the area in the 12th minute that went right at Ghana goalkeeper Richard Kingson, the Czechs determined to get the goal back.

The theme of distance shots continued moments later on the Ghana end as Appiah tried his luck from far out, but his shot sliced away from the goal and went wide of Cech's post.

Sulley Ali Muntari twice tried to add to Ghana's lead as he attempted shots from similar distances outside the area, but both shots missed the target and failed to even bother Cech.

Karel Poborsky came the closest for the Czechs to equalizing as the midfielder got on the end of a ball played down the right, but his low shot goes just barely across the face of the far post.

Ghana turned right around on the end and Amoah had a chance to cause trouble for the Czechs when he turned and shot with his right boot, but the effort was



well high.

In the 39th minute, Appiah narrowly missed after some nice work by Gyan going down the right, but the shot was just centimeters wide of Cech's right-hand post from 27 yards, but the Ghanians certainly weren't sitting on the one-goal lead.

A Poborsky cross in the 42nd minute caused trouble for Ghana as Tomas Rosicky ran to get on the end of it, but his shot only went wide of the goal.

Nedved headed home a cross just after the second-half restart as the Czechs looked to strike quickly, but the Juventus star had just barely drifted offside and it was

disallowed.

But, in the 52nd minute, Cech had to be alert to keep the match within reach for the Czechs as sprawled to stop a stinging shot from Gyan at the edge of the area. Jiri Stajner came on to replace Poborsky in the 57th minute and nearly had a hand in an equalizer as his low cross went all the way across the area untouched, but Plasil's shot was high.

But things soon got really bad for the Czechs as Tomas Ujfaluszi hauled down Amoah in the area in the 65th minute, earning Ghana a penalty kick. Ujfaluszi was sent off for the offense.

However, they were thrown a lifeline when Gyan's effort crashed against the post and no one was able to get on the rebound.

Amoah, the man who earned the spot kick, hit a wonderful shot from a tight angle in the 72nd minute, but Cech was able to swat it away. He then kept them in the game again a minute later as Muntari had a shot from inside the area stopped.

Michael Essien was the next to test Cech in the 78th minute after a beautiful, flowing buildup by Ghana, but the Chelsea keeper was equal to his shot as well. A minute later, Gyan should have put the game away when Amoah played him through alone on Cech, but he shot right into the goalkeeper's legs.

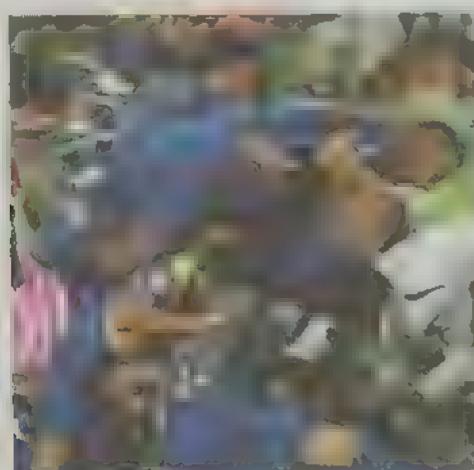
**0-2 Sulley Ali Muntari 82nd minute**

But Cech could save them no longer in the 82nd minute as Gyan played Muntari into the area on the right and the Udinese midfielder hit a stunning shot inside the near post to put the game away for Ghana.

Late on, Kingson made two fine saves to preserve the clean sheet on Ghana's first-ever World Cup win.

By Stephen Sharpe

## 9-Man USA holds Italian Stallions



Substitute DaMarcus Beasley thought to have scored in the 65th minute, but his strike sailed past McBride who turned out to have been off-side. As McBride attempted to touch the ball, his off-side situation went from passive to active.

Zambrotta caused danger in the American area four minutes later, sending a low curved strike just past the right post.

Kasey Keller showed his value as goalkeeper when preventing Alessandro Del Piero's header from hitting the net in the 73rd minute.

As the final phase began, both teams seemed to be getting tired and the Italians, although on the attack, ran out of ideas.

In the last minute of regular time, Gilardino tried a header but his effort went just wide of Keller's goal.

In added time, the ball hardly left the American half as the Italians hunted for a late winner, but the US defense and goalkeeper Keller would not allow it.

The final whistle sounded and the Americans were still alive in Group E, where all decisions will have to come on the final day.

By Jonathan Roorda

## Japan and Play-out Stalemate



**NUREMBERG** - Desperately looking to improve on their opening matches, Japan and Croatia didn't do much in that department on a hot Sunday in Nuremberg as the two Group F rivals played to a 0-0 draw.

With both sides desperate to claim three points and boost their hopes of advancing from

this incredibly tough group, Japan started the brighter of the two sides putting enormous pressure on the Croatian defense, but they held firm and the Japanese couldn't get much in the way of scoring chances.

The Croats then tried to fling balls into the area and cause panic in the Japan defense, and in the 20th minute a free kick came in and Werder Bremen striker Ivan Klasnic just missed touching it home at full stretch.

But two minutes later, Croatia were awarded a penalty when Tsuneyasu Miyamoto took down striker Dado Prso in the area, and earned a booking that will see him miss the match against Brazil.

Japan, though, had goalkeeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi to thank for preserving the 0-0 scoreline when he reacted well to save Dario Srna's effort low and to his left.

The Blue Samurai then took Kawaguchi's praise and gave them to their crossbar when it kept out a fine shot by midfielder Niko Kranjcar in the 28th minute.

In the 32nd minute, Croatia defender Robert Kovac picked up a yellow card for a foul on Atsushi Yanagisawa, a caution that will keep him from facing Australia.

The Croatians nearly took the lead two minutes later, though, by freak luck when a seemingly normal backpass to Kawaguchi skipped up over his foot as he went to control, but the ball missed the target.

Six minutes into the second half, Japan should have taken the lead as a cross by Shunsuke Nakamura picked out

Yanagisawa at the far post, but his shot was awful and missed wide of the far post.

Quickly on the other end, Klasnic did well to control a ball eight yards from control under heavy pressure, but his shot bounced through and Kawaguchi was able to save.

In the 54th minute, Kranjcar found himself with another good chance to give Croatia the lead when a perfect cross from the left found him in the area, but his sliding shot went wide.

Nine minutes later, a free kick from right by Srna found the head of defender Josip Simunic in the area, but his effort skipped wide of the post and Croatia looked to be a bit frustrated at their inability to hit the back of the net.

In the 66th minute, Marko Babic broke down the center of the pitch and had support on either side of him but decided to take a shot from 20 yards that missed terribly

wide.

For the next 10 minutes, Croatia turned up the pressure as they desperately went in search of a go-ahead, and possibly winning, goal, but Japan actually were the next to look dangerous as substitute Keiji Tamada ran onto a ball in the area, but his cross was unable to find a teammate. Eight minutes from the end, substitute midfielder Luka Modric came in from the left and fired a shot that went just narrowly wide of the far post, and then Ivica Olic missed with a weak header.

In the 89th minute, Japan defender Alessandro Santos made a fine move to create space in the area, but his shot looked more like a centering pass and it was cleared for a corner.

The two sides will need victories in their final games to have a chance to qualify for the knockout rounds.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Italy	2	1	1	0	4	1	4
Czech	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Ghana	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
USA	2	0	1	1	1	4	1

June 22	Czech	Italy
June 22	Ghana	USA
June 17	Italy	1-1
June 17	Ghana	2-0
June 12	Italy	2-0
June 12	USA	0-3
	Czech	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Brazil	2	2	0	0	3	3	3
Australia	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Croatia	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Japan	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

June 23	Croatia	Australia
June 23	Japan	Brazil
June 19	Brazil	Australia
June 19	Croatia	Japan
June 14	Croatia	Australia
June 12	Australia	Japan

# 2006 FIFA WORLD CUP Germany

## AHN SAVES THE DAY FOR SOUTH KOREA

**FRANKFURT** After he took the World Cup by storm in 2002, Ahn Jung-Hwan reappeared in Germany on Tuesday, scoring a brilliant winner in a 2-1 win against 10-man Togo in Frankfurt.

The opening phase of the game offered nothing to the fans as the teams failed to string passes together and looked disjointed and the Togolese resorted to the long ball to attempt to get something going offensively. Togo also played the Koreans very physical, especially when Park Ji Sung touched the ball in midfield, to try to keep them from flowing at all. Jean-Paul Abalo then got a booking for one such foul, followed quickly by one for Alaxys Romao in the 24th minute.

0-1 Mohammed Kader 31st minute

But then, Togo struck very quickly as a ball looped in was well-controlled by Mohammed Kader and he then hit a brilliant strike that tucked its way into the far corner past Lee Woon-Jae.

Korea, in a bid for an equalizer, created their best chance of the game at that point when Choi Jin-Cheul rose to hit a header off of a corner kick, but the ball was cleared after creating some danger.

Yao Junior Senaya then made a bid for another with a dangerous free kick from just outside the area, but Lee Woon-Jae, Korea's hero in 2002, managed to push the goal-bound shot over the bar.

With the introduction of Ahn Jung-Hwan at the interval, Korea immediately looked to press forward with more aplomb, and Park immediately tried to take the initiative, but fired over the bar from the top of the area.

Kader, just three minutes into the second half, was not shy about wanting to grab a second when he unleashed a fierce shot from the right side of the area, but Lee Woon-Jae was able to stop it away.

Three minutes later, Ahn had an ambitious effort from the edge of the area fly wide of the goal as he looked to continue his goal-scoring exploits from 2002.

The Togolese, though, were dealt a major blow in the



54th minute when Abalo was given a straight red card when he brought down Park in the midst of a goalscoring opportunity, and it then got much worse.

1-1 Lee Chun-Soo 54th minute

The resulting free kick from just outside the area by Lee Chun-Soo was nothing short of perfect as the ball eluded the wall and then Togo goalkeeper Kossi Agassa for the equalizer.

A cross from the left by Young-Pyo Lee nearly resulted in a lead for Korea, but Cho Jae-Jin was just a step late on his header and the danger was cleared.

But then, it was Togo who had a chance to go in front as ball into the Korea area was not dealt with properly, allowing Moustapha Saliou the chance to shoot uncontested, but he ballooned his shot high.

Cho then missed wide with a header from a right-channel cross in the 71st minute, but then Korea would take the lead through that man Ahn.

2-1 Ahn Jung-Hwan 72nd minute

Ahn, the man who beat Italy four years ago, took the ball at the top of the area, moved over to his right, and then fired a brilliant shot into the far corner with Agassa left helpless.

Lee Young-Pyo's bid for a third goal two minutes later was denied by a sliding Agassa as he kept his side in the game.

Kader, not one to give up easily, was given space about 30 yards from goal after a Korean giveaway, but fortunately for the Asians, the shot missed the target.

The Koreans then held the ball for much of the remainder of the game and will move on to their next game three points to the good.

By Stephen Sharpe



## Silky Spain Thrashes Ukraine

**LEIPZIG**, Spain jumped on Ukraine early and never let up, beating the 10-man debutants 4-0 in their opening Group H match at the Zentralstadion in Leipzig, backed by a David Villa double.

Ukraine had the first real chance of the game when a free kick swung in from the left by Ruslan Rotan was met by the head of Vladimir Yezersky, but the defender's effort was wide after five minutes.

Three minutes later, Luis Garcia was played into the area well, but his shot toward the near post missed the target with two Ukrainian defenders near.

In the 13th minute, a beautiful curling shot by Marcos Senna forced a nice save out of Oleksander Shovkovsky, but the resulting corner would see Spain go in front.

1-0 Xabi Alonso 13th minute

The inswinging corner toward the near post found the head of Liverpool playmaker Xabi Alonso, and the ball deflected past Shovkovsky into the net to give Spain an early lead and give Alonso his first goal for Spain.

2-0 David Villa 16th minute

Andriy Rusol was booked for a foul in a central position 25 yards from goal, and after Mariano Pernia ran by the ball, David Villa hit a perfect right-footed shot over the wall and past a helpless Shovkovsky. The pace of the game then slowed as Ukraine got their feet underneath them on the World Cup stage, but Spain still had a considerable advantage in terms of possession.

In the 33rd minute, Ukraine finally managed to get Iker Casillas involved when Andriy Gusin fired in on goal from the left channel, but his effort lacked power and the Real Madrid goalkeeper easily gathered.

Villa raced into the area in the 44th minute in a bid for a second goal, but under pressure from a defender, the Valencia striker hit a tame shot that was deflected to Shovkovsky.

By Stephen Sharpe

## France looking to bounce back



In a match between France having trouble finding the route to goal and a Korea Republic outfit that toiled before overcoming Togo in their opener, the stakes could hardly be higher. As the second round of Group G matches gets under way, something's got to give at the Zentralstadion in Leipzig.

Germany 2006 must feel like déjà vu all over again for France. After encountering Switzerland home and away in qualifying for this 2006 FIFA World Cup™, the French faced their Alpine neighbours again in their first match of the finals, and for the third time in a row, the match ended in a draw. Having failed to find the net at Korea/Japan 2002, France have now gone four FIFA World Cup matches in a row without a goal.

Korea, on the other hand, have begun this FIFA World Cup in the same way that they finished the last – on a winning note. In 2002, they reached the semi-finals under current Australia coach Guus Hiddink, and last Tuesday, the Taeguk Warriors began a new campaign by seeing off Togo 2-1. Yet while they took the three points, the Asian side put in an unconvincing display. They were a goal behind at the break, but the Africans then had a man sent off, and that swung the balance. That said, it still needed

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Korea	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
France	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Switzerland	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Togo	1	0	0	1	1	2	0

June 23	Togo	France
June 23	Switzerland	Korea Rep
June 19	Togo	Switzerland
June 18	France	Korea Rep
June 13	France	Switzerland
June 13	Korea Rep	Togo

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Spain	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
France	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Switzerland	1	0	1	0	0	0	1

June 23	Saudi Arabia	Spain
June 23	Ukraine	Tunisia
June 19	Spain	Tunisia
June 19	Saudi Arabia	Ukraine
June 14	Tunisia	Saudi Arabia
June 14	Spain	Ukraine

a flash of individual brilliance from Ahn Jung-Hwan to secure the win. Now with another Dutchman at the helm, former Netherlands and Rangers manager Dick Advocaat, Korea will undoubtedly have to strike a richer vein of form if they want to take points from the 1998 champions. Past meetings

This will be the first time that the two countries have faced each other in FIFA World Cup competition, and only their third ever meeting. France have come out on top both times thus far. The first meeting was at the 2001 FIFA Confederations Cup, where the French cantered to a 5-0 win.

Things were a lot closer the second time around, a few days before the start of Korea/Japan 2002. France won 3-2 on that occasion, but lost Zinedine Zidane to injury.

The duel

Lilian Thuram v Ahn Jung-Hwan: The French defender and Korean striker are both on the comeback trail. Thuram had announced his international retirement after UEFA EURO 2004, only to return for one last hurrah, and will

win his 116th cap against Korea. In doing so, he will equal the French record for international appearances held by fellow defender and 1998 team-mate Marcel Desailly.

Ahn, meanwhile, has had to fight his way back into the reckoning, after being dropped due to his poor form over the last two years. The Duisburg attacker rediscovered his touch in the Bundesliga towards the end of the 2005/06 season, however, and that trend continued with his match-winner in Korea's opening match against Togo.

What they're saying

Willy Sagnol, France defender: Our defeat against Senegal is still very fresh in the memory, but our current situation is far better than it was in 2002. We are unbeaten at the moment, and we know that we can rely on a solid defence, which is absolutely vital if you want to win the World Cup.

Ahn Jung-Hwan, Korea Republic forward: I know that we are the weaker of the two teams, but if we don't expect too much, we won't be as disappointed if we lose.

# RISING STARS



You can take the boy out of Frankston, but you can never take Frankston out of the boy. Truer words were never said, according to Matthew Parks.

Despite leaving Frankston Pines for Hearts FC in Edinburgh, the young midfielder will never forget his roots. "I'll always love Frankston. It was my first senior team and they were really good to me there," he says of his former stomping ground.

But in saying that, don't even try and think that Matthew may consider returning, at least not yet. "I love it there too. Living in Edinburgh is great; it's a really nice place to live. But yeah I'd like to eventually move back there (to Australia). For now though, I enjoy it here."

And why shouldn't he? The game over there has the sort of attention media and fan wise which we in Australia can only dream about. Take for example; after the team's huge Scottish Cup victory when over 100,000 success-starved Hearts supporters lined the streets of Edinburgh to toast the Glasgow-defeating cup winners.

However, ever the professional, Parks hasn't let

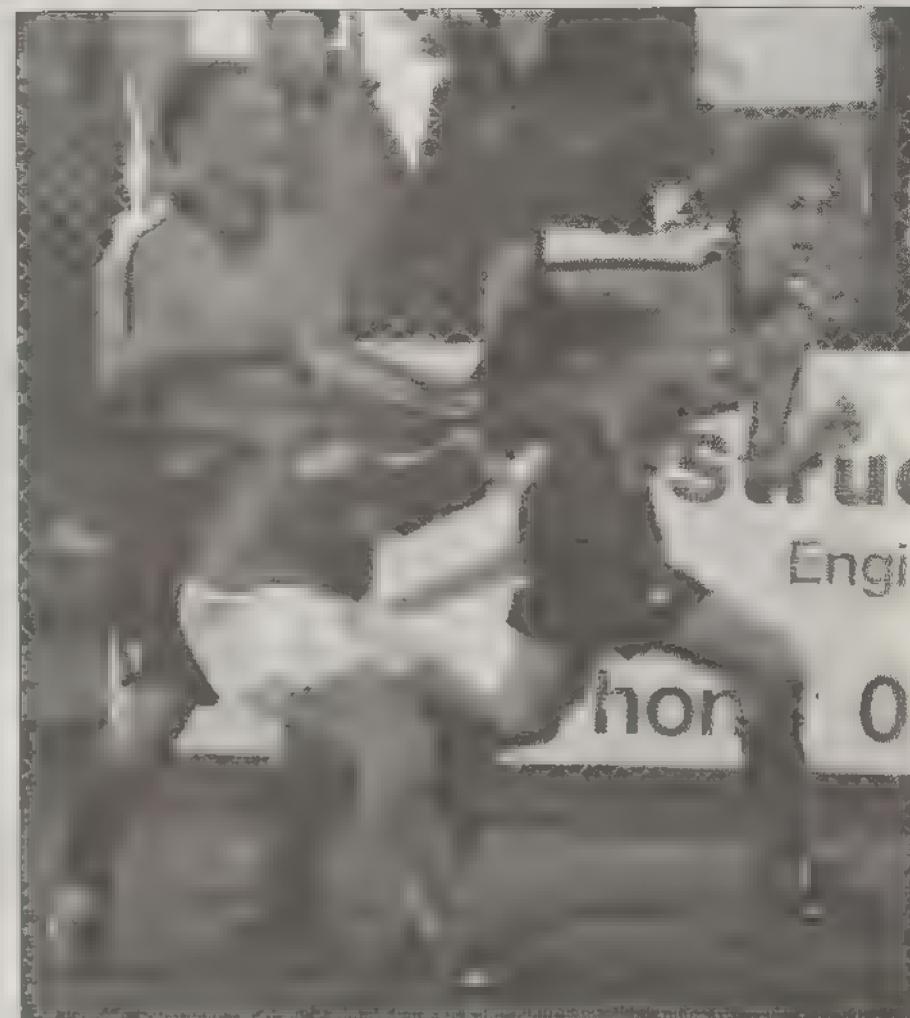
the team's success go to his head. He is realistic about the team's prospects in this year's Scottish Premier League and Champions League. "We fell away at the end of last year (in the Premier League). We just need to work hard and we can achieve something special."

Work hard is just what they will do with Parks only a week away from flying back to Scotland to begin pre-season training. Although he may acknowledge the fact that he will require a miracle to be playing in the Champions League, it doesn't prevent him from sharing the excitement of the rest of the squad at Tynecastle. "It's the first time Hearts have ever made it to the Champions League, so yeah we're all really excited at the club. We have two qualifying games first before we may make it to the main draw".

He is slowly becoming more and more accustomed to the Scottish way of life, so much so that he watched Braveheart just a couple of weeks ago. The final verdict? "It was good, I actually hadn't seen it before then so it was inevitable I had to watch it some day," he claims. However, he hasn't become so attached to Scotland that he would swear his allegiance by the cross of St. Andrews and, thank the lord, he still refuses haggis. "My family I'm staying with over there keep trying to make me eat it but I won't go near the stuff."

So, luckily for Australia we may see Parks don the green and gold of the Socceroos yet (maybe even in our next World Cup win!), just as he did as an Under 17. "I played against teams like Mexico and Turkey, coming off the bench at about the 60th minute both times. It was awesome." "Playing for the Socceroos is one of my dreams, so hopefully in a few years time I might make the team."

By Jeremy O'Neill



Top: Matthew (right) playing against the Melbourne Knights before heading over to Scotland

[mailbag@goalweekly.com](mailto:mailbag@goalweekly.com)

## GOAL! WEEKLY MAILBAG

Dear Goal! Weekly,

As a Melbourne Victory supporter who attended each and every home game last season, I feel it my duty to inform the rest of the Victory die-hards out there of the absence of our Kevin Muscat during the team's pre-season training. After seeing off my parents on their way to an overseas holiday, who should I see about to jet off to Germany but our captain and reigning Victory medallist.

I find this an absolute disgrace that Ernie Merrick and the bigwigs over at Victory headquarters allow their captain to trot off to the World Cup for a few weeks. What kind of message does this send out to the rest of this young and impressionable team, especially when the team has a poor season like that of the Victory's? He should be made to spend the World Cup down at the pub in the early hours of the morning just the same as every other football fan in Australia, not least because he's the skipper of our team and he should be preparing to lead his team of young players towards A-League success.

Finally, congratulations on the newspaper and keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely,  
John Stewart, Frankston

Dear Goal! Weekly,

Great work with the paper as it is nice to see the VPL make it into print rather than just reading about it on websites.

I would however like to see some more controversial stories make the paper especially things I would never be able to find on the FFV website

Regards,  
Gianni Laior.

Dear Goal Weekly,

I've really enjoyed watching the World Cup on SBS the last week or so and some of the shows it broadcasts before the main matches start. One of those shows has been "Song for the Socceroos". As much as it's all been well and good for the game blah blah blah, what I can't understand is some of the voting by the judges. Whilst some songs have been fair and received votes accordingly, why do the judges lie to the contestants when the songs are obviously crap. Everyone seems to get a 6, 7 or 8 from the panel. If the song is really bad (some of those ballads by the soccer mums were extremely painful) why don't the judges come out with it and tell the artist like it is? If your song is shite and is worth a "2" then so be it...and don't give up your night job mate.

Regards,  
Rex, Abbotsford

Dear Goal Weekly,

Like everyone else I've been reading the daily papers this week with all the soccer stuff in them. Find it absolutely amazing how many overnight soccer experts have suddenly appeared from nowhere. I never thought I'd ever see the day. However, what's really bugging me, and I'd never thought I'd ever say this either, but what's happened to Peter Desira? Can you possibly shed some light on this matter and tell me why we haven't seen Peter write anything in the Herald-Sun since the World Cup started? I know people have got their differences of opinion on Peter, but I really hope he hasn't been shafted since the game went through the roof with all the coverage. All of a sudden, so many dodgy names we've never heard of before, who know nothing about the game. Shame on the powers that be if this is the case.

Regards,  
Ivan, Packenham

Congratulations to Ivan you are this week's winner of our letter of the week competition.

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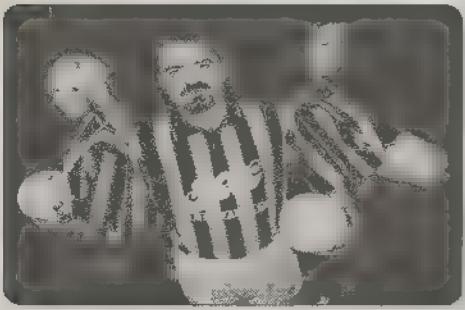
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# Katsa's Korner

With George Katsamboukas



## 8/16 VPL 6/9 State 1

### No Money, No Honey – No Pay, No Play!

Two sayings heard in various after dark places in Melbourne, they also apply to Victorian football. Players have managed to take a stranglehold on clubs with their excessive pay demands which is slowly but surely, sending a number of them broke.

It's a vicious cycle that goes something like this:

Player A rates himself highly, so much so, that when he watches the English Premier League highlights program, he pictures himself strutting his stuff on the Melbourne football pitches in front of 50 people and the 4 passes bys that have taken their kids to the local park, which happens to be next door to the football ground.

He really thinks that he is somebody special.

Club A are very interested in player A, and to quote the Judge from *Midnight Express*, he is told, "the coach he like you Billy". Music to player A's ears, the mind begins to wander and becomes a human calculator. Throw in some thoughts of which other clubs he will tell his new potential club that are interested in him, ne-

gotiations then begin.

Venue for these negotiations can vary from a dingy dressing room, a store room converted into an office next to the dingy dressing rooms, or the up market clubs venue of choice are restaurants and cafe's. Enter the player, enter the club administrator, one starts high, the other starts low, a figure is soon arrived at. Some of the worlds best negotiators can learn a thing or two from players on the art of successful negotiation, as they will use every trick in the book to make sure that they receive the money that they believe they deserve.

"I've played in high leagues: I was club best and fairest 3 years running, I'm fitter than I have ever been: You won't regret signing me: I will make a difference to the side" these all roll off the player's tongue at ease.

"Done deal player A", sign here, happy end for player A, the club administrators only enjoy temporary happiness, as they now have to ensure that they can raise enough money to meet not only player A's weekly payments, but also player B's, C's, D's and so on.

The end result for some clubs is a sad end - numbers do not add up, revenue forecast does not equal revenue received, players remain unpaid, no money, no honey – no pay, no play. These thoughts enter their minds and the team starts to slide down the ladder.

The above is nothing new to Victorian football and sadly continues year in, year out. Clubs need to learn to live within their means and only promise to pay players what they can afford to pay them; otherwise, they will cease to exist.

Players need to realize that as individuals they do not necessarily attract more people to matches, that they are not Ronaldo, Beckham or Rooney. If they were then they wouldn't be playing here. Speaking of negotiating with players, it reminds me of a true story back in my club administration days.

Player X: "Katsa I'm happy that we have agreed to a figure and I will sign tonight.



*According to player agent Kenny players need to "know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em, know when to walk away, know when to run"*

Katsa: "That's great player X"

Player X: "Katsa I was thinking about taking out private health insurance"

Katsa: "Medibank Private and HBA have some great plans"

Player X: "How much do they cost per week Katsa"

Katsa: "About \$25 if you're Single"

Player X: "I was hoping that the Club would cover this"

Katsa: "Would you also like the club to find you a wife, a car, look after your rent repayments, send someone to do your shopping and also wash your clothes each week?"

Believe it or not, there was a long pause at the other end of the phone, as Player X was thinking about which of the above he would ask for!

Another week without a full round of Vodafone Cup matches, the South Melbourne Vs Melbourne Knights catch up match was played, end result being a 7-0 victory to South Melbourne,

and Joe Biskic losing his wicket, retired hurt. Eight coaching changes in sixteen rounds; eight of the fourteen clubs have changed Coaches, will there be more? Simple answer? Yes there will be, there are a couple of Vodafone Cup coaches that have been sent out as night watchmen over the two week break, the Jury is ready to deliver its verdict when the games recommence.

All roads lead to the Grange Reserve this Friday night, for the traditional derby between Kingston City and Oakleigh Cannons. Hopefully the game itself lives up to the hype from both sets of supporters over the last six months.

#### BREAKING NEWS:

Which Premier League club is in merger talks with a State League Division 1 club?

Stay tuned

From last week's edition:

Bet of the week, by the way when you read this the match would have been played, Stonington City to beat Knox City for a return of \$3.25.

If you don't see a Katsa's Korner next week, it means that Stonington City provided a happy end, please forward all my mail to Mykonos.

After Knox saluted the judge with a 3-0 victory over Stonington City, the closest that I will come to Mykonos is looking at the photos of its beaches on my lounge room wall.

My assistants were also confident and had spent the week shopping for the trip, now I know the real meaning of no money, no honey!

Until next week....

This is Katsa, but not as you've known him. And when the Fat Lady sings, I hope that you're a winner!

## Matildas Lose To China

The Qantas Matildas have begun their two match tour against China with a narrow 2-1 loss in Shanghai (China) tonight

The match started off very tight with both sides creating early chances but unable to find the back of the net. It took a while for the Qantas Matildas to settle in against a similar Chinese team to the one they hosted in Australia late last year.

The deadlock was broken in the 28th minute when a defensive error resulted in Australia conceding an own goal which gave China a 1-0 lead. The Qantas Matildas collected themselves after this lapse in concentration and created a number of opportunities as the match headed to half time, although China did have the bulk of possession throughout the half and defended their lead well.

The second half saw the Qantas Matildas equalise three minutes in when Jo Peters put her cross from the left in behind the Chinese Defence and Sarah Walsh was on hand to neatly finish past an advancing Chinese goalkeeper.

The remainder of the second half was punctuated by a very high foul rate which did not allow the match to flow or reach any great heights. China took the lead again with a successful penalty in the 75th minute following a controversial foul by Australia in the penalty box. The Qantas Matildas fought hard for an equaliser but unfortunately was not forthcoming, with China holding on to record a narrow victory in the first of the two-match series.

After the match, Qantas Matildas coach Tom Sermanni was pleased with his team's performance despite the loss.

"In the first 30 minutes we were outplayed, but ironically within that period we had our best chance."

"Once we settled down we played some good football and then we did create opportunities but couldn't capitalise."

"In the second half it was quite difficult for the players to keep their composure due to the high number of fouls that were being called, but that was also a good learning exercise for the team."

"I'm pleased we were competitive for the full 90 which means our physical preparation is on track and con-

sidering the Chinese national team has been in full time camp for the past 3 months there are a lot of positives that I can take out of this match," concluded Sermanni.

The Qantas Matildas will play one more fixture against China in Shanghai on Monday 19 June before returning home and preparing for the AFC Women's Asian Cup which kicks off in Adelaide on 16 July. It will be the first time Australia have hosted an Asian tournament since joining the AFC on January 1 this year, with the tournament doubling as qualifiers for next year's FIFA Women's World Cup.

#### Match Details

Australia 1 (Sarah Walsh 48')

China 2 (own goal 28', Pu Wei 75' (pen))

Venue Shanghai FA Training Centre - China

#### Qantas Matildas

Melissa Barbieri (gk), Heather Garriock, Di Alagich (Rhian Davies 69'), Cheryl Salisbury (c), Kurla Reuter, Lana Harch (Joanne Burgess 56'), Jo Peters, Sally Shipard, Alicia Ferguson, Kate Gill (Lisa De Vanna 66'), Sarah Walsh (Caitlin Munoz 59')

Substitutes Not Used: Lydia Williams (gk), Kate McShea, Clare Polkinghorne, Lauren Colthorpe, Kylie Ledbrook

#### Next Fixture:

Monday 19 June 2006: Qantas Matildas v China, Shanghai Kick-Off 1600 (china local time)



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# STATE LEAGUE ONE



As division one reaches the half way point it is a good idea to take a look at all twelve teams and to see just where they are and where they want to be and what they have to do to be where they want to be.

It isn't any coincidence that all these players play for the top five teams and that is part of the reason why you are at the top end because you have people who consistently deliver. None of these lads would be out of place in the Vodafone Cup and it will be hoped that their goals will propel their team there in 2007.

## 1. Springvale White Eagles

21 Points (Top scorer Papadopoulos 5 Goals)

The White eagles promoted last season as division 2SE champions came into this season with high expectations of doing something in 2006. They have over the past few seasons developed their facility in Keysborough into a wonderful stadium with floodlights and a delight to visit. They have also built a squad which is able to deal with most problems thrown at them, they have been consistently in the top two and I expect them to be no lower than third or fourth by seasons end and are as good a chance as any for one of the 2 promotion spots.

## 2. North Geelong

19 Points (top scorer Tony Saric 8 goals)

With a game in hand on the other teams around it the Warriors sit in a place I fully expected them to be. Their squad easily won division 2NW last season and they have assembled a squad which mixes the experience of the Cervinski brothers and the Saric Brothers with many young exciting players to end up with a squad which fears no one and commands great respect from all opponents. I said in round one this was my pick as champions and 11 weeks later I still think that to be the case.

## 3. Western Suburbs

19 Points (Top scorer Leander Russo 3 goals)

The absolutely surprise packet of the season and an absolute breath of fresh air this season, traditionally this is a team with limited resources but this season they have excelled assembling a coach and a squad the equal of any of the top sides in the league and they have molded them into a unit which is competitive against everyone. Everyone down at the Ralph Reserve should take a bow as to the success this club enjoys and I can see this team right in the mix for the top two although they may just fall short this season 2007 may well be their year.

## 4. Brunswick City

18 Points (Top scorer Christopher Greechan 8 Goals)

This team has probably been a goalkeeper short of a top two team and at times this has cost them. An attacking team with goals in them from a lot of players they produced a coup in signing exciting youngster Christopher Greechan who hasn't disappointed. A team who will be well amongst it when the seasons done but one which may fall just short again.

## 5. Langwarrin

17 Points (Top Scorer Caleb Nichols 7 Goals)

Langwarrin are a consistently hard team to play but a frustrating one at the same time, too many draws have been their undoing and this is why they are fifth and not higher up the ladder. They seem to struggle to take the next step this side. It took quite a few years where they were the nearly team of division two until they got into the division some few seasons ago now they seem to sit consistently in fourth to seventh position without really going up or down.

## 6. St Albans

17 Points (Top Scorer Josip Loncaric 4 Goals)

It's a testament to their committee and the work of their players and coaching staff that this club is where it is. Everyone down at the Churchill reserve was devastated when on the final day of the season they were relegated as the Sunshine Georgians survived in the VPL. This saw the virtual disintegration of their senior squad as those who could move to other VPL clubs to continue their career in the top flight. A virtual new squad was bought in and even as the season began they were still tweaking their squad and tinkering. That they have been competitive is a testament to the work done there. The need a consistent goal scorer if they are to make the next step. I see them surviving comfortably this season and being a big threat in 2007.

## 7. Port Melbourne

13 Points (Top Scorer Thor Krapko 4 goals)

A team which probably expected to be a little higher up than they are this is the second season in division one for the sharks and they seem to have settled on mid-table status and lack the consistency to go any further. I think this is about as high as they will get and will need to maintain a level of consistency to avoid teams below them that will no doubt make their charge.

## 8. North Coburg

12 Points (Top Scorer Grant Mussel 4 Goals)

The sleeping giant of the bottom six teams and one who had an absolutely horrible start and were bottom after the first half a dozen games and looking down the barrel. Whatever they did to arrest the slide worked a treat and now they sit as probably the sleeping giant of the bottom six and the team I think will be able to best move into the top six. I think they will keep rising and teams just above them should watch out.

## 9. Altona East

11 Points (Top Scorer Taxiarhis Apostolakis 2 Goals)

The top goal scorer on two goals says it all a team which has just about been impotent this season scoring just six times, it's a testament they are where they are given this miserly return. If things don't improve however the bottom three beckons for this team and they will be in the relegation dogfight for the remainder of the season, should just survive though or finish in the third bottom playoff spot.

## 10. Bentleigh Greens

10 Points (Top Scorer Christopher Driver 4 Goals)

The greens were gone at this time last season in the VPL and at this stage having rebuilt their squad occupy the playoff spot in division one. They have the potential to kick themselves out of the bottom three but will need to show more fight and turn narrow losses into draws and draws into wins at some stage if they are to rise up. They always give a good account of themselves but doing this alone and not getting a result is not going to save them. I see them finishing eighth to tenth at best.

## MID-SEASON REVIEW



Can they get off the bottom, I think the simple answer may be no.

My predictions for the rest of the season

Champions North Geelong  
Runners up: Springvale White eagles  
Tenth (Playoff Spot) Altona East  
Relegated: Northcote and Dandenong

By Reuben Schembri

## State One Leading Goal Scorers

- Chris Greechan 8
- Tony Saric 8
- Caleb Nichols 7
- Adrian Cervinski 6
- Nik Papadopoulos 5

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# JUNIOR LEAGUES



Dandenong Thunder JSC	9 4 1 4 4 23 13	Hampton JSC	6 2 0 4 17 22 6	MILO Boys East 14 B	P W D L F APT	Eastern Lions	7 4 1 2 10 8 13	Watsonia Heights JSC	6 0 0 6 1 34 0
Brighton JSC	9 3 2 4 13 13 11	Lyndale Utd	6 1 0 5 548 3	Southern Stars JFC	8 8 0 0 15 6 24	Knox City JSC	7 4 0 3 16 9 12	MILO Boys NW 13 B	P W D L F APT
Berwick City JSC	9 2 1 13 13 9	Casey Panthers JSC	7 1 0 6 7 52 3	Manningham JSC	9 5 0 1 3 13 18	Doncaster Rovers JSC	7 2 1 4 17 15 7	Brunswick Zebras JSC	8 8 1 0 61 0 25
Mornington SC	8 2 2 4 13 27 9	Endeavour Hills SC	6 1 0 5 257 3	Bulleen JSC	9 5 1 2 18 # 7	Croydon City Arrows JSC	7 0 4 3 4 12 4	Epping City SC	9 8 0 1 41 2 24
Hampton Park Jtd	9 1 1 5 12 24 9			Melbourne Utd	9 5 1 3 22 1 16	North Caulfield JSC	7 1 1 5 22 2 4	Fawcett JSC	9 8 2 1 154 5 20
Seaford Jtd	9 0 1 8 5 39 1			Glen Elira JSC	9 4 2 3 23 16 13	Riversdale Raiders	7 0 1 6 2 28,1	North Coburg Juniors SC	9 8 0 3 22 19 18
MILO Boys South 15 B	P W D L F APT			Charlton JSC	8 4 1 3 23 16 13			Heidelberg Utd	- 9 4 2 3 23 20 14
Dandenong City JSC	9 8 0 0 63 11 27	Brighton	8 7 1 0 30 15 22	North Caulfield JSC	8 2 3 3 14 9 9	Laverton Park JSC	9 3 1 5 16 28 10	Brunswick City JSC	9 1 4 4 9 28 7
Bentleigh Greens JSC	9 8 0 1 16 5 24	Berwick City	8 6 1 1 123 7 19	Whitewhore	7 2 0 5 9 23 6	Bentleigh Greens JSC	7 4 1 2 16 10 13	Hoppers Crossing JSC	8 1 5 6 8 40 5
Endeavour United JSC	9 6 1 2 28 8 19	Beaumaris	8 5 2 1 26 6 17	Springvale City JSC	8 1 1 6 10 22 4	Croydon City Arrows JSC	7 4 0 3 18 14 12	North Sunshine Eagles JSC	9 0 3 5 344 3
Berwick City JSC	9 5 0 4 21 19 15	Heatherton Utd	8 4 1 2 20 14 13	Clayton JSC	9 0 0 9 4 46 0	Northcote City JSC	7 3 1 3 13 10 10	Mill Park JSC	8 0 1 8 444 1
Rosebud JSC	9 4 1 4 20 29 13	Mornington	8 4 1 3 16 12 13			Ringwood City JSC	7 1 1 5 15 14		
Baxter Soccer Club	9 4 0 5 15 22 12	Dandenong City	8 2 1 5 12 15 7			Frankston Strikers JSC	7 0 1 6 7 35 1		
Langwarrin SC	9 3 1 5 22 29 10	Sandringham City	8 1 3 4 6 16 6						
Beaumaris SC	9 3 1 5 28 28 10	Hampton	8 1 1 6 7 27 4						
Brighton JSC	9 0 1 8 4 41 1	Cranbourne Comets	8 0 1 7 7 40 1						
Mornington A	9 0 1 8 5 51 1								
MILO Boys South 14 A	P W D L F APT								
Springvale White Eagles	8 8 0 4 48 9 24	Sandringham City JSC	8 6 1 1 151 6 19						
Mornington	9 7 0 2 26 12 21	Noble Park JSC	8 5 2 1 236 3 17						
Brighton	8 5 0 2 38 18 18	Langwarrin SC	7 4 3 0 20 3 15						
Sandringham City	9 5 0 3 32 15 18	Seaford Utd	8 4 2 1 22 9 15						
Langwarrin	9 5 1 3 24 10 18	Dandenong Thunder JSC	8 4 2 2 31 10 14						
Lyndale Utd	8 4 0 4 27 25 12	Springvale White Eagles	8 3 1 4 28 13 10						
Berwick City	8 3 1 4 23 19 10	Pentinsula JSC	8 1 1 6 3 37 4						
Hampton Park Jtd	9 1 0 8 8 49 3	Mornington SC	7 0 2 5 144 2						
Beaumaris	9 1 0 8 10 58 3	Rosebud JSC	8 0 1 7 270 1						
Baxter	9 1 0 8 7 58 3								
MILO Boys South 14 B	P W D L F APT								
Frankston Pines JSC	8 7 0 1 144 6 21	MILO Boys South 11 Kangaroos Green	P W D L F APT						
Dandenong City JSC	8 7 0 1 25 4 21	Berwick City	8 6 1 1 123 7 19						
Cranbourne Comets JSC	8 5 1 2 38 4 16	Beaumaris	8 5 2 1 26 6 17						
Brighton JSC	8 4 1 1 21 21 13	Heatherton Utd	8 4 1 2 20 14 13						
Mornington SC	8 3 1 20 15 10	Mornington	8 4 1 3 16 12 13						
Langwarrin SC	8 3 1 4 17 24 10	Dandenong City	8 2 1 5 7 23 7						
Pentinsula JSC	8 3 0 5 528 9	Devonport	8 2 0 6 6 18 6						
Sandringham City JSC	8 1 0 7 10 38 3	Carrum Utd	8 0 0 8 143 0						
White Star Dandenong JSC	8 1 0 7 6 46 3								
Heatherton Utd	0 0 0 0 0								
MILO Boys South 13 A	P W D L F APT								
Bentleigh Greens JSC	9 7 1 1 24 7 22	MILO Boys South 11 Joey's Blue	P W D L F APT						
Dandenong Thunder JSC	8 7 0 1 131 3 21	Berwick City	8 8 0 0 58 524						
Berwick City JSC	9 6 0 3 36 8 18	Sandringham City	8 7 0 1 31 10 21						
Brighton JSC	9 5 1 231 1 16	Enceavour Utd	8 5 1 2 18 15 18						
Frankston Pines JSC	8 6 0 3 20 6 15	Baxter	8 2 1 5 16 21 7						
Langwarrin SC	8 4 2 2 21 5 14	Dandenong City	8 2 1 5 7 23 7						
Devonport JSC	9 2 3 4 16 24 9	Devonport	8 2 0 6 8 18 6						
Mornington SC	9 1 2 8 4 45 5	Carrum Utd	8 0 0 8 143 0						
Hampton Park Ltd	8 0 2 6 3 31 2								
Endeavour Jtd	9 0 1 8 3 49 1								
MILO Boys South 13 B	P W D L F APT								
Berwick City JSC	9 7 0 2 42 10 21	MILO Boys East 11 Joey's Red	P W D L F APT						
East Bentleigh JSC	8 7 0 1 39 9 21	Brighton	8 7 1 1 22 5 22						
Lyndale Utd	7 6 1 0 31 5 19	P W D L F APT	8 8 0 2 0 34 4 20						
Sandringham City JSC	8 5 1 2 30 10 16	Mornington	9 6 1 2 20 7 19						
Beaumaris SC	9 5 1 3 27 15 16	Dandenong City	9 6 1 2 20 10 19						
Brighton JSC	9 3 0 8 19 25 9	Hampton	9 5 0 4 20 10 16						
Philip Island JSC	8 2 2 6 17 38 8	Keysborough	8 3 0 5 12 19 9						
Carum Jtd	8 2 0 6 8 35 6	Brighton A	8 4 2 3 18 3 19						
Hampton Park Jtd	9 1 1 7 8 50 4	Berwick City	9 1 0 8 7 34 3						
Langwarrin SC	8 4 2 2 21 5 14								
Mornington SC	9 2 0 7 17 22 6								
Hampton Park Jtd	8 0 2 8 3 29 2								
MILO Boys South 13 C	P W D L F APT								
Beaumaris	8 8 0 0 30 6 24	MILO Boys East 16 A	P W D L F APT						
Cranbourne Comets	8 5 2 1 27 8 7	Bulleen JSC	8 7 0 1 58 721						
Springvale White Eagles	8 5 0 2 19 14 15	Riversdale Raiders	8 6 1 1 30 1 19						
Langwarrin	8 4 2 12 18 14	Nunawading City JSC	8 5 1 2 29 15 16						
Brighton	8 2 0 6 10 24 6	East Bentleigh JSC	8 5 1 2 28 5 16						
Berwick City	8 1 1 5 17 4 17	Manningham JSC	8 5 1 2 18 10 16						
Baxter	8 1 1 5 4 19 4	Glen Waverley JSC	8 1 1 6 5 18 2 9						
Sandringham City	8 1 1 5 6 8 3 4	Sherbrooke Rangers JSC	8 1 1 6 8 4 3 4						
MILO Boys South 12 A	P W D L F APT								
Berwick City SC	8 8 1 1 24 5 25	MILO Boys East 16 B	P W D L F APT						
Brighton City JSC	8 6 2 1 26 7 20	Bulleen JSC	8 6 1 2 13 7 16						
Sandringham City JSC	8 6 2 2 27 13 20	North Caulfield JSC	7 4 1 2 34 8 13						
Pontine JSC	8 4 3 2 20 7 16	Boronia JSC	7 4 1 2 20 15 13						
Bentleigh Greens JSC	8 4 2 3 18 12 14	South Melbourne JFC	7 4 1 2 24 11 14						
Mornington SC	9 2 0 7 17 22 6	Richmond JSC	8 4 1 2 28 5 16						
Brighton JSC	8 0 2 7 6 8 6	North Caulfield JSC	8 4 1 2 14 11 16						

MILO

# JUNIOR LEAGUES



## MILY Boys North 12 D

	P	W	D	L	F	APT
Greenvale Jtd	9	7	1	13	3	22
Broadmeadows Utd	9	7	1	13	4	22
Essendon Royals JSC	9	8	3	0	32	6
Morialta Jtd	8	5	0	3	18	13
Youth Jtd	8	3	3	2	17	4
Brunswick Zebras JSC	9	4	0	5	14	22
Hume Jtd	9	3	2	+14	18	11
Watsonia Heights JSC	9	2	1	6	15	34
Morialta Wolves	9	1	1	7	11	32
Alphington	9	0	0	5	5	40

## MILY Boys North 11 Kangaroos Green

	P	W	D	L	F	APT
Bundaburra JSC	6	8	1	12	3	19
Preston Lions JSC	8	5	3	2	14	5
Brunswick Zebras JSC	8	5	0	3	18	5
North City Lions JSC	8	5	2	1	12	17
Brunswick City JSC	8	4	1	3	20	10
Heidelberg Stars JSC	8	3	0	5	13	17
Heidelberg Utd	8	2	0	8	26	8
Epping City SC	8	1	0	7	6	31
Eltham North JSC	8	0	0	8	13	0

## MILY Boys North 11 Kangaroos Purple

	P	W	D	L	F	APT
Melbourne Knights JSC	8	8	2	0	30	7
Essendon Royals JSC	8	5	2	1	27	8
Whiteside Stallions JSC	8	5	1	2	14	6
Light Utd	8	4	3	1	18	3
Fawkner JSC	7	4	1	2	13	12
Morialta City JSC	7	3	0	4	12	9
North City Lions JSC	8	2	1	5	13	6
Brunswick Zebras JSC	8	0	1	7	4	27
Clifton Hill Utd	8	0	1	7	4	34

## MILY Boys North 11 Joey's Blue

	P	W	D	L	F	APT
Moreland Jtd	9	8	1	0	37	22
Diamond Valley Jtd	8	8	1	0	26	3
Essendon Royals JSC	8	8	1	2	18	6
Watsonia Heights JSC	9	5	0	4	13	12
Kew Park SC	8	3	1	4	10	12
Light United North JSC	8	3	0	3	14	5
North Coburg Utd	8	2	2	4	7	0
Lalor Jtd	8	1	1	6	4	20
Brunswick City JSC	8	1	1	6	5	38
Epping City SC	9	1	0	8	23	3

## MILY Boys West 1d A

	P	W	D	L	F	APT
Altona Rovers	8	8	0	5	9	27
Kew Park	8	7	1	1	41	6
St Albans	8	7	0	2	17	21
Western Eagles	8	5	1	3	22	20
Ballarat Academy Of Soccer	8	4	3	2	28	17
WVSA	8	3	0	6	22	31
Sunbury Utd	8	2	1	8	17	40
Leventon Park	8	1	3	5	12	22
Gisborne	8	2	0	7	10	42
Sunshine Heights	8	0	1	8	2	57

## MILY Boys West 15 A

	P	W	D	L	F	APT
Sunshine Georgies JSC	9	7	2	0	52	8
Allona Magic JSC	8	5	3	1	16	9
North Sunshine Eagles JSC	8	5	2	1	33	10
Brimbank JSC	9	5	2	2	28	15
Ballarat Academy Of Soccer	8	5	1	3	18	16
Kew Park JSC	8	4	2	3	27	14
Avondale Heights JSC	8	3	0	4	35	8
St Albans	8	2	0	7	22	39
Melton SC	8	2	0	8	29	40
Hoppers Crossing JSC	8	0	0	8	28	0

## MILY Boys West 14 A

	P	W	D	L	F	APT
Altona Rovers	8	5	1	2	7	8
Green Gully	8	5	1	2	3	18
Kew Park	8	5	2	1	22	7
Ballarat Academy Of Soccer	8	4	2	2	14	7
Altona City	8	4	1	3	25	8
Leventon Park	8	2	2	4	14	21
Hoppers Crossing JSC	8	2	0	8	12	24
St Albans	8	1	2	5	8	23
Brimbank	8	0	1	7	14	21

## MILY Boys West 1d A

	P	W	D	L	F	APT
Sunshine Georgies JSC	8	7	1	0	40	7
Sunshine Georgies	8	2	1	34	12	20
Ballarat Academy Of Soccer	8	6	1	2	32	14
Kew Park	8	6	0	3	22	12
Wembury City	8	5	0	3	21	10
Sydenham Park	8	3	2	4	11	15
Green Gully	8	3	1	5	18	10
Western Eagles	8	3	1	5	18	19
Williamstown	8	1	0	8	18	64
Melbourne Knights	9	0	0	9	145	0

## MILY Boys West 12 A

	P	W	D	L	F	APT
Green Gully JSC	8	7	1	1	28	5
Altona Rovers JSC	9	7	0	1	22	11
Altona City JSC	8	8	2	1	39	6
Brimbank JSC	8	6	2	1	27	8
Wembury City JSC	9	6	1	3	21	11
Melbourne Knights JSC	9	8	3	3	25	11
Kew Park JSC	9	3	1	5	18	17
Sydenham Park JSC	9	2	0	7	52	8
Hoppers Crossing JSC	9	1	0	8	45	3
Sunshine Heights JSC	8	0	0	9	26	0

# WHO'S HOT AND WHO'S NOT

David Cohen looks at the 32 World Cup teams and their chances, one week after the tournament's opening match.

**It could be extremely dangerous to give a firm view on which teams are likely to make it through to the next round of this year's World Cup since one swallow does not make a summer.**

However, having said that there are those teams that have certainly enhanced their chances of going even beyond the first hurdle of making Round Two, while some of the more fancied teams expected to do so have had shocking openers.

#### Group A:

The first surprise of the tournament was the defeat of Poland by the lesser fancied South Americans, Ecuador, who have shown remarkable improvement since the last tournament in Asia. Those people who may have put money on Ecuador could be in for a good run for their money and a place in the quarter-finals may not be that far-fetched.

Germany, the hosts, could be better than most pundits had predicted. One has to believe that home ground advantage may be significant to earn them a semi-final place. It must be added that a victory against Costa Rica is hardly worth getting excited about. Captain Michael Ballack's return to duty will bolster them considerably. Miroslav Klose has impressed up front while Torsten Frings and Bastian Schweinsteiger have been solid in the midfield.

Poland, it must be said, were poor against Ecuador. The deciding match to see who will top the table at the end of Round One takes place on Tuesday the twentieth of June when the two unbeaten teams, Germany and Ecuador meet. This could prove to be a lively affair. Already Poland and Costa Rica are effectively out of the tournament. On the same day both the bottom two teams clash for pride and for third and fourth place.

#### Group B:

A number of people have been suggesting that England have a chance of repeating their 1966 triumph. What I saw of their effort against Paraguay and for most of their match against Trinidad and Tobago suggests that they have their work cut out to do so. Their only hope will be for one of their excellent midfielders or Wayne Rooney when he eventually plays, to score the goals since Peter Crouch, in my humble opinion is not up to that level against the really top teams.

Sweden were one of the big disappointments of the opening round of fixtures. Admittedly Trinidad and Tobago played out of their skins against them. Unfortunately for them, against England the Caribbean outfit could not repeat their heroics of their match against the Swedes and succumbed in the last ten minutes of the match against a far superior England.

England, by virtue of this latest victory are certain of a place in Round Two. Sweden left it late against Paraguay to record their first goal and victory of the tournament. A Freddie Ljungberg strike in injury time has almost certainly secured a passage into the next round although their final match against England is crucial for the Swedes. Whoever were to win this match will top the final log in Group B.

## OVERSEAS TRANSFER NEWS with George Egonidis



With the World Cup well and truly in full swing, transfer rumours are thin on the ground this week, but two players who have already made an impression at the tournament are attracting interest from big European clubs.

Fernando Torres, one of the stand-outs in Spain's 4-0 demolition of Ukraine, has caught the eye of Alex Ferguson, who is willing to meet Atletico Madrid's £25m valuation for the 22-year-old striker. But reports out of Italy suggest that United might to battle for his signature with AC Milan, which sees the man known as "El Nino" as an ideal replacement for Andrei Shevchenko.

German defender Phillip Lahm, whose long-range strike against Costa Rica opened the scoring in Germany, has become another on Jose Mourinho's long list of possible left-backs next season. With interest in Ashley Cole and Roberto Carlos simmering away on the backburner, Chelsea believes that £10m would prise Lahm away from Bayern Munich who, for the record, have insisted that the diminutive international is not going anywhere.

And in brief...

Chelsea's Glen Johnson has snubbed a move to PSV Eindhoven and will move to Portsmouth on loan next season instead.

Benfica's £5m-rated Portugal midfielder Armando Petit says he has been offered a contract by Manchester United.

Wigan plan to offer up to £4m for Newcastle

Tottenham is looking to replace one Reid with another. With Leeds keen to take Republic of Ireland midfielder Andy Reid on loan for a year, Spurs have this week had an offer of £2m for Blackburn's Steven Reid rejected by Rovers. They're also on the trail of Aston Villa's Gareth Barry, who would cost in excess of £3m, and Chelsea striker Carlton Cole, who will finally leave Stamford Bridge for good after being starved of opportunities. West Ham and Celtic, however, are looking to hijack the move for Cole - the latter seeing him as the man to fill West Brom-bound John Hartson's boots.

Marseille are reportedly undeterred by the sickening break in Djibril Cisse's leg which will sideline the Frenchman for six months, and will press ahead with move for the hapless striker. This is music to Rafael Benitez's ears, as he lines up moves for Blackburn's Craig Bellamy for £6m and Seville's £8m-rated right-back Daniel Alves.

Transfer-listed Fulham midfielder Steed Malbranque has attracted the interest of at least five English clubs, with Newcastle thought to be amongst the frontrunners to secure his signature this summer. West Ham, though, is keeping close tabs on the auction in case they have to replace Yossi Benayoun, who may return home to Israel. Middlesbrough, Manchester City and Liverpool are the other clubs reportedly willing to meet the £5m price tag on Malbranque's head.

Chelsea's Glen Johnson has snubbed a move to PSV Eindhoven and will move to Portsmouth on loan next season instead.

Benfica's £5m-rated Portugal midfielder Armando Petit says he has been offered a contract by Manchester United.

Wigan plan to offer up to £4m for Newcastle



Argentina hit its straps and destroyed Serbia and Montenegro 6-0 in the ultimate football lesson

#### Group C:

Argentina impressed me in their opening match against a lively Côte d'Ivoire team. The Ivorians were they to be in another group may have had a better chance of qualifying. Any slip-ups in this group will be fatal. The South Americans, at this stage, may be a better bet than the favourites Brazil to lift the trophy, especially with the much-acclaimed teenager, Lionel Messi's first appearance imminent. In the first match Juan Pablo Sorín, Juan Roman Riquelme, Hernán Crespo and Javier Saviola were the stand-out players.

The Netherlands are one of the best disciplined teams of the thirty two. I have always fancied them to reach the finals, and I genuinely expect them to get there. Their coach Marco Van Basten has the makings of being close to the best of all time. Arjen Robben was one of the stars of the first round of fixtures and if he can maintain that level they could go all the way.

Côte d'Ivoire's last chance to qualify for the final sixteen will be if they defeat The Netherlands in their next match. Didier Drogba holds the key for them here. Serbia and Montenegro would be surprise qualifiers from this group. There is still life left in this, the Group of Death!

This group should see both Mexico and Portugal go through. The Mexicans impressed in their victory over Iran while Portugal laboured somewhat against one of their former colonial countries, Angola.

One cannot see the Mexicans losing to Angola and this victory would ensure a passage through to Round Two. The Portuguese would need to show more than they did against a rather physical Angolan team. They do have Luiz Filipe Scolari as their coach which should be worth a few more victories at the tournament. I do not see them as having the class of a number of the other teams.

The biggest disappointment of this group had to be the USA, not because of their loss to the Czech Republic, but in the way that they lost. This is also a competitive group, but one would have expected far better from the fifth ranked side in the world.

Admittedly the Czech Republic are ranked second. For me the two stand-out players in this group are the two Czechs, Tomas Rosicky and Jan Koller. What a shrewd buy Rosicky could be for Arsene Wenger and Arsenal. Despite their domestic problems the Italians are looking strong and appear set to join the Czech Republic in the next round. Francesco Totti and Luca Toni could be the players to watch as the tournament proceeds.

#### Group D:

The way in which Australia came back to defeat Japan was impressive and a victory against the Croatians would earn them a ticket into the next round. I was not that impressed with the Brazilians. Before we write them off, we need to realise that they are the number one team in the world.

Ronaldo looked a pale shadow of his former self. But while his performance was well below par, it was worth noting that at times it needed three Croatians to mark him which opened up the gaps for the other players. The deciding game for the Croatians will be their eagerly-awaited clash against the Australians. One would expect the Croatians to beat the Socceroos, but it will be tight. Kaka's strike against Croatia was superb and he could be the player to watch.

#### Group E:

It was in the final of the 1998 World Cup in Paris that France last scored a goal in the World Cup Tournament. A lack-lustre display against the Swiss in their opening match of this year's World Cup was unacceptable.

I felt that Zinedine Zidane's as well as Patrick Viera's sell-by-dates have passed. Thierry Henry's performance was well below that of his Arsenal ones. It did not look to be a happy team. They should still qualify for the next round, but on current performances will probably make a quick getaway shortly thereafter.

This group is very much up for grabs, that is should anyone really want it. South Korea's excellent showing at the 2002 World Cup could have a satisfactory sequel this time around and their victory over Togo sees them, at this early stage, drawn in pole position. It is left to three of France, Switzerland and South Korea to fight it out for the top two positions. I give both France, that is if they can find the best combinations, and South Korea the edge to do so.

#### Group H:

Spain has, over the past few World Cups, been extremely slow starters. This time around they have sounded a serious warning that they could be the surprise package and make a semi final place, at least. Their demolition of Ukraine was impressive. Their team is one of exciting talent and the team I backed at the 1998 World Cup could eventually crack it. Tunisia and Saudi Arabia should fight it out for second place. Their match was one of the least appealing of the opening round. Neither would disgrace the second round.

#### Semi final prediction:

The teams that I fancy to make the semi's are: Brazil; Argentina; Holland and Spain.

David Cohen writes for leading sports news agency Soccerway and various agencies such as AFP.

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Tuesday 20 June

# FOOTBALL FOCUS...with Louie Acevski



Name: Louie Acevski

Club: Heidelberg United S.C

Position: Goalkeeper

Age: 28

Height: 183 cms

Weight: 85 kgs

Nickname: No Nickname

Previous clubs: Adelaide City, Northern Spirit, Melb Knights, Preston Lions & St Albans S.C

**Outfield player you most enjoy watching in the VPL?** Roddy Vargas cause everything he does he makes it look so simple.

**In the world?** Thiery Henry for obvious reasons.

**Hardest team to keep against?** All equally hard!

**Occupation?** Sales Rep.

**Craziest team mate of all time?** Nick Sabljak because he thinks his Zvonomir Boban.

**Most Influential coach of all time?** All current and previous coaches have played some part throughout my soccer career.

**Most memorable match as a player?** Playing for Melb Knights against Perth Glory in front of 38,000 spectators.

**As a fan?** Australia VS Japan 2006 World Cup

**Where were you when Australia drew 2-2 with Iran? At the Game!**

**And when Australia qualified for the World Cup against Uruguay?** At home watching it with the family.

**Predict the following results:**

Australia vs Brazil – Would have already been played.

Australia vs Croatia – 1:1

**Your tip for the 2006 World Cup?** Argentina

**Representative honours?** Victorian State Seniors Team 2005 China Tour.

**Most important save you've made?** Penalty save against South Melb last season 2005 to enable us to qualify for the Grand Final.

**Have you ever scored a goal?** Not at senior level, but that will have to change before this season ends.

**Worst injury:** Broken Wrist.

**Funniest moment in football?** Eric Vassiliadis tripping 3 times over the ball in the space of 5 seconds with absolutely nobody near him in this year's game against Bulleen at Olympic Village and then jumping up and yelling out "Brilliant Eckers"!

**Record number of juggles in single attempt?** If I could juggle the ball I would become a outfield player.

**Steak, chicken parma or seafood?** Chicken Parma

**Chips, veggies or salad?** Chips

**Pizza or souvlaki?** Pizza

**Favourite drink, non alcoholic and alcoholic?** Chordial & Beer.

**Favourite nightspot?** At home with the family, there is always something happening there!

**Favourite holiday destination?** Anywhere, as long as I get to get away from everyday life.

**Kitchen whiz or home handyman?** A bit of both.

**What's in the CD player right now?** Nothing, not a big fan of music. Stick to SEN 1116 AM.

**Dream date?** Definitely my beautiful wife and also my gorgeous daughter Isabella. My number 1 girls!

**First team-mate you'd invite to a party, and why?**

Definitely Eric Vassiliadis because he would be the life of the party.

**On the end of season trip, the last player to shout drinks will be...** Jimmy Roumbos because he would get drunk and have to go to bed before the night begins!

**Match day superstitions or rituals?** No superstitions or rituals but I make sure I get an afternoon 'siesta'.

**Typical matchday meal?** Would have to be a couple of sandwiches.

**Favorite sporting team when growing up?** Everton F.C.

**What are your strengths?** Shot stopping, communicating on the park and the fact that I hate losing.

**What are your weaknesses?** Too many to mention.

**Ten pin bowling or skydiving?** Ten pin bowling.

**Toughest opponent?** Every player that tries to score past me.

**Select a player that you play most like?** Difficult to answer who I play like but I can say that I would like to share Oliver Kahn's style and aggression.

**Which team do you select when playing FIFA soccer on a computer game?** Any team that is rich in the game.

**What is the last soccer shirt you bought?** I have never bought a soccer shirt to this day.

**Funniest rumour you have heard about yourself?** Too many to specify.

**Childhood soccer idol?** Diego Maradona – the best player ever to play the world game.

**Favorite former Socceroo?** Goran Lozanovski - best right peg I have come across.

**Favorite Current Socceroo?** Tim Cahill – runs, tackles, headers and most importantly score goals!

**What song or movie to do you get inspiration from?** Rocky



**Do you watch Footballers Wives?** Yes

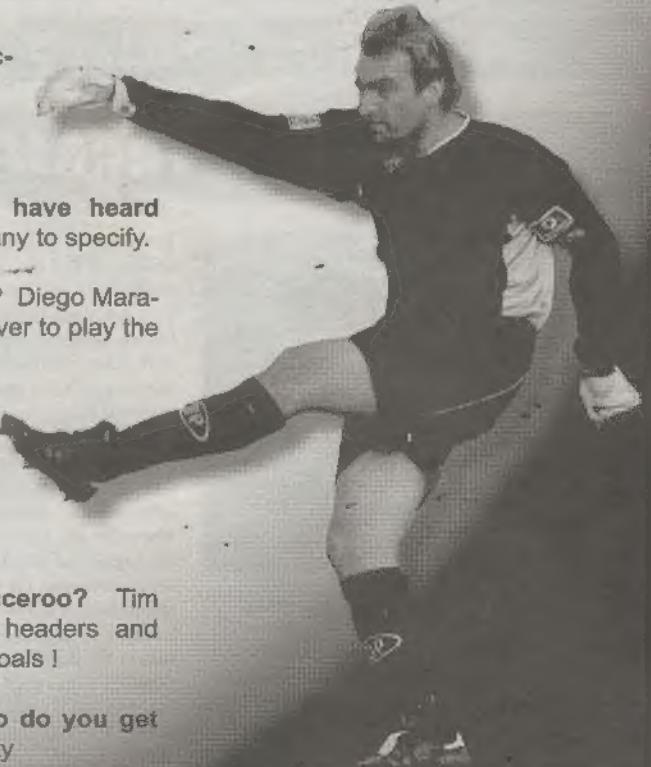
**Best away ground you like to visit?** B.T Connor Reserve.

**If I didn't play football I'd play...** cricket. A game where you can eat and drink whatever you like and still be able to be a champion definitely interests me.

**What fictional character would you most like to be; why?** Dino the Dinosaur cause my daughter absolutely adores him.

**Hollywood is making a movie about your career. Who would you select to play you in a movie?** Brad Pitt because he looks a bit like me. hahaha

**Any other bits of Lou Acevski trivia you want us to reveal?** That's all for now.



the

## VICTORIAN FOOTBALL SHOW

wednesdays 9pm on channel 31

And don't forget to watch the offside!

# LOU ACEVSKI

HEIDELBERG UNITED FC

GOAL!  
WEEKLY



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